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THE CATHOLIC CREED

The Catholic Creed

or

What do Catholics Believe?

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1907

By the

Very Rev. FATHER J. PROCTER

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THIRD EDITION, REVISED

"Can anything good come from Nazareth? and Philip saith to him, *Come and see.*"—John i, 46.

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PREFACE

So many articles of faith are accredited to Catholics which they themselves repudiate, and so many Catholic practices are misunderstood by those who are not of us, that it may be a help to earnest seekers after the truth to draw up in a simple form, and as succintly as the subjects will admit, a CATHOLIC CREED, as an answer to the question which must perplex many,

WHAT DO CATHOLICS REALLY BELIEVE?

dwelling at greater length upon the points of Catholic doctrine which are called in question, and oftentimes misrepresented by many outside the Catholic fold.

The quotations from the Fathers of the Church are taken either from the edition of Abbé Migne, or the one published in Paris by Gaume in 1836, except in a few instances, when they have been copied verbatim from the Anglican Library of the Fathers. They are given as evidences of continuity of doctrine in the Catholic Church. "Whosoever revolteth, and *continueth not* in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God; he that *continueth* in the doctrine, the same hath the Father and the Son" (2 John v, 9).

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The Catholic Creed

CHAPTER I

FAITH

THE first article of the Catholic Creed is the necessity of faith. The first word of that profession of faith is, "I believe." Before a child is baptized into the fold of Christ, it is asked by the priest, the minister of Christ: "Dost thou believe?" And the infant answers, through its sponsors or godparents: "I do believe." Faith is the first step on our way to God. St Paul puts it forcibly: "Without faith it is impossible to please God. For he that cometh to God must 'believe' that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that seek Him."[1] The Council of Trent speaks of faith as "the beginning of human salvation, the foundation and root of all justification."[2]

Human faith is essential to the knowledge of the things of earth. Divine faith is needed if we are to know the things of God. A student of science must believe in its axioms and first principles before he can advance in science. He must believe that two and two make four, before he can do a sum in proportion. He must admit that "the whole is greater than the part," before he can master the first propositions of the first book of Euclid. A writer, or even a reader of history, must have faith in those who have written before he was born, whom consequently he has never known or seen, else he will live in a labyrinth of doubt. How does

[1] Heb. xi, 6. [2] Sess. vi, 8.

he know that William the Conqueror came over to England in the year 1066, or that King John signed the *Magna Charta* in 1215, or that George I ever ruled over England, except that he has faith in history and believes in the credibility of historians? Our natural knowledge would be limited to what falls under the ken of our senses, we should know only what we have seen or heard or felt or touched or handled, were it not for human faith. How few of us have been to China, India, Australia. Yet we believe in their existence as we believe in our own. We take it on faith. Human knowledge is impossible except on the presupposition of this human faith, this belief in our fellow-men. If then in our search for human knowledge we must have human faith—faith in our fellow-men—in our quest for divine truth we must needs have a divine Guide whom we can trust, an inspired Teacher whom we can believe, an infallible Master to whom we can confidently and unhesitatingly give a loyal and uncompromising obedience. "If we receive the testimony of men, the testimony of God is greater."[1] Faith is the soul of supernatural religion, for "he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be condemned."[2] Faith is the bridge over which we must pass to the other world. It is the first rung in the ladder by which we must ascend from earth to heaven. It is the mirror which reflects in a dark manner the thoughts and ways of God. As the astronomer needs a telescope to bring the heavenly bodies within the scope of his vision, so the Christian needs faith. Faith brings God to man, heaven to earth, light to darkness. We can only reach God, we can only see Him, we can only hear His words and know His will by faith. "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor My ways your ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are exalted above the earth, so are My ways exalted above your ways, and My thoughts above your thoughts."[3] God reveals His ways and His

[1] 1 John v, 9. [2] Mark xvi, 16. [3] Isa. lv, 8, 9.

thoughts, and by faith we believe in His revelation. Without faith we are like a little bird imprisoned in a room. It sees the blue sky, the verdant fields, the trees, the flowers; it flutters hopelessly against the window—it cannot reach them. So is it with the human mind in its relation to divine truth. God opens the window, the mind escapes from its prison, and on the wings of faith it reaches divine truths. Sometimes God opens the window to us, and reveals His ways and thoughts directly, as He did on Sinai. Sometimes He makes known His law through His servants, the patriarchs and prophets. Then He speaks to us through His incarnate Son, "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spoke in times past to the fathers by the prophets, last of all in these days hath spoken to us by His Son."[1] Again He speaks to us through His divinely appointed Church, which was to be His witness to the world. Hence we have faith in God, "I believe in God the Father almighty"; we believe in the teaching of His Son, "I believe . . . . in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord"; we have faith in the teaching of His Church, "I believe in the Holy Catholic Church"; we believe, too, in His revelation through the scripture, as we express it in the Creed of Pope Pius IV, "I also admit the holy scriptures, according to that sense which our Holy Mother the Church hath held and doth hold, to whom it belongeth to judge of the true sense and interpretation of the scriptures."

Faith simply means taking God at His word. It means obedience to His voice, in whatever way and through whatever channel we believe that He speaks to us—whether through His prophets, His written word, His divine Son, or the Church which we Catholics regard as the mouthpiece of Him who has said of His Church, "He that heareth you heareth Me."[2] Faith, therefore, is the first article of our Catholic creed. Without it we could not "please God," nor be His children; without it we could not know His will, nor understand His law. They who walk only by sight go

[1] Heb. i, 1. [2] Luke x, 16.

astray into unknown paths. We need a supernatural guide; obedience to the guide is faith.

We will now proceed to consider what are the objects of our faith, or, in other words, what are the articles of our creed. What do Catholics really believe? First, we must know that there is a true Church before we can believe in her. Then we must know what is her creed, before we can make profession of it. Reason is not a sufficient guide to supernatural truth. Truth is above reason. Therefore, before all things, the earnest seeker after truth must realize the fact, and, realizing it, must pray with the blind son of Timaeus: "Lord, that I may see," see, i.e., in the light of faith. He should make his own the plaintive, pleading words of the late Cardinal Newman, written at a time when his earnest mind was still groping in the darkness:

> Lead, kindly light, amid the encircling gloom,
> Lead Thou me on.
> The night is dark, and I am far from home;
> Lead Thou me on.

The "encircling gloom" is the "night" of error, or the dim twilight of doubt. The "home" is the "Father's home"—His one true Church in time, and heaven in eternity. The "kindly light" is faith. How "kindly" that light of faith has been to many! May it be kindly to many more still, and lead them on

> O'er moor and fen, o'er crag and torrent, till
> The night is gone.

CHAPTER II

GOD

1. "We must believe that God is,"[1] the Apostle tells us. Hence, we begin our creed thus: "I believe in God the Father almighty," who proved His almightiness by being "the Creator of heaven and earth." The existence of God is a matter, or object, or an article of faith." We *believe* in God. Learned men, it is true, can *prove* the existence of God. St Paul says that "the invisible things of God, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made; His eternal power also and His divinity. From which He argues that "they are inexcusable" who "have not glorified Him as God nor given thanks."[2] The Vatican Council defines: "If any one assert that God cannot be known from created things by the natural light of human reason, let him be anathema."[3] St Thomas Aquinas proves the existence of God by five arguments which, to a man of intelligence are convincing,[4] but as the majority of men are not learned, the majority have to take the existence of God "on faith," as we say, i.e., they must *believe* in it as a truth of revelation. We need not dwell upon this truth, although it is the most fundamental of all truths, because it is only the "fool who says in his heart: "There is no God."[5] Even the heathens believed in God, though they were misguided, and worshipped false gods instead of the one, true and only God, "the King of ages, immortal and invisible, the only God to whom is honour and glory throughout all ages."[6] Idolatry is a testimony to the existence of God. Idolaters believed in God, but they knew not who or what God was, and so "they changed the glory of the incorruptible God into the

[1] Heb xi, 6.
[2] Rom. i, 20, 21.
[3] Sess. II, De fide 11, can 1.
[4] *Summa*, 1ª par. qu. ii, art 3.
[5] Ps. xiii, 1.
[6] 1 Tim. i, 17.

likeness of the image of a corruptible man, and of birds, and of four-footed beasts, and of creeping things . . . . and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen."[1] They lacked faith. Perhaps they had not even received the revelation of God; and so, not having faith they were led away by their senses to things that were of earth. They knew not the God of heaven. Idolatry proves that men, at least in the aggregate, need to *believe* in God's existence if they are to "know the one true God."

2. God is one and one only, one in nature, essence and power: one always, one everywhere; one in time, one in eternity; unchanged and unchangeable. "Thou, O God, art the selfsame and Thy years never fail."[2] The Gnostics, then the Manichaeans, and later still the Albigenses, upheld a pluralty of gods. The Manichaeans and Albigenses maintained that there were two gods, one the author of evil, and the other the author of good. The Catholic Church in all her creeds—the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed, the Athanasian Creed—professes with unfaltering voice: "I believe in one God." The nature of God is incommunicable. A plurality of gods, even a dual principle, is an impossibility, an inconsistency, a contradiction. There can only be one God.

3. Yet, although God is one, and can only be one, in that one God there are three persons, Father, Son and Holy Ghost. This is called the mystery of the Blessed Trinity. It is a *mystery* of revelation, and consequently an article of our faith. We cannot prove or fathom a mystery, else it would cease to be a mystery. We can prove from revelation that it exists, but the unaided reason cannot understand it. Reason must bow down in lowly obedience to the voice of revelation. St Athanasius in the creed which is called "the Athanasian" gives a clear exposition of the Catholic teaching upon this mystery:

[1]Rom. i, 23, 25. [2]Ps. ci, 28.

"Now the Catholic faith is this, that we worship one God in trinity, and Trinity in unity.

"Neither confounding the persons, nor dividing the substance.

"For there is one person of the Father, another of the Son, another of the Holy Ghost.

"But the Godhead of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost is all one: the glory equal, the majesty coeternal.

"Such as the Father is, such is the Son, and such is the Holy Ghost.

"The Father uncreate, the Son uncreate, the Holy Ghost uncreate.

"The Father incomprehensible, the Son incomprehensible, the Holy Ghost incomprehensible.

"The Father eternal, the Son eternal, the Holy Ghost eternal.

"And yet there are not three Eternals, but one Eternal.

"As also they are not three Uncreates, nor three Incomprehensibles; but one Uncreate, and one Incomprehensible.

"In like manner the Father is almighty, the Son almighty, and the Holy Ghost almighty.

"And yet they are not three Almighties, but one Almighty.

"So the Father is God, the Son God, and the Holy Ghost God.

"And yet they are not three Gods, but one God.

"So likewise the Father is Lord, the Son is Lord, and the Holy Ghost is Lord.

"And yet they are not three Lords, but one Lord.

"For like as we are compelled by the Christian verity to acknowledge every person by himself to be God and Lord:

"So we are forbidden by the Catholic religion to say there are three Gods or three Lords.

"The Father is made of none, neither created, nor begotten.

"The Son is from the Father alone, not made, nor created, but begotten.

"The Holy Ghost is from the Father and the Son, not made, nor created, nor begotten, but proceeding.

"So there is one Father, not three Fathers; one Son, not three Sons; one Holy Ghost, not three Holy Ghosts.

"And in this Trinity, there is nothing before or after, nothing greater or less; but the whole three persons are co-eternal together and co-equal.

"So that in all things, as is aforesaid, the Unity is to be worshipped in trinity, and the Trinity in unity.

"He therefore that will be saved must thus think of the Trinity."

4. This doctrine of the unity of nature and trinity of person in God explains several texts of holy scripture, in some of which God speaks, or is spoken of, in the singular number, in others He speaks, or is referred to, in the plural. The former texts refer to the unity of Godhead, the latter to the trinity of persons. To the first category belong such words as, "I am who am,"[1] "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one,"[2] "That they may know Thee, the only true God,"[3] "One God and Father of all."[4] To the second category we may refer the following inspired texts amongst others: "Let Us make man,"[5] "Let Us go down and confound their tongues."[6] The words of the angel of the Annunciation, too, reveal the divine mystery of the Blessed Three: "*The Holy Ghost* shall come upon thee, and the power of *the Most High* shall overshadow thee. And, therefore also, the Holy which shall be born of thee shall be called *the Son of God*."[7] Our Lord's own testimony again is convincing: "*I* will ask *the Father*, and He will send you another *Paraclete*."[8] His commission to His apostles is conclusive: "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of *the Father*, and of *the*

[1] Exod. iii, 14. [2] Deut. vi, 4. [3] John xvii, 3. [4] Eph. iv, 6.
[5] Gen. i, 26. [6] Gen. xi, 7. [7] Luke i, 35. [8] John xiv, 16.

Son and of *the Holy Ghost*."[1] The sign of the cross which the Catholics of to-day make, in union with the Catholics of the early ages (as both St Cyril of Alexandria and St Cyril of Jerusalem remind us) together with the words which they are accustomed to say, "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," is a constant profession of faith in the mystery of the Blessed Trinity as well as in the mystery of the man's redemption.

5. Before leaving this subject it may be well to add, that, although we cannot by reason unaided by revelation, prove this or any other mystery, no mystery can be *disproved* by reason. For, as St Thomas reminds us, mysteries though above reason, do not contradict reason. They are simply in a higher sphere, and reason cannot reach them unless God lift it up by grace. Reason cannot see them except in the light of God's countenance. "In Thy light we shall see light."[2] Pascal was right when he said: "Faith affirms many things respecting which the senses are silent, but nothing that they deny." We may say the same of reason. Revelation and science—true science—can never be at variance. The theologian and the true scientist always agree; though they may start from different premisses, their conclusion is the same.

6. We believe that "God is." We believe that He is one in nature. We believe that in this one God there are three persons. And how do we think of God, one in nature and three in person? What is His relationship to us men? Do we think of Him as Eliphaz the Thenamite thought of Him, and say with him: "What doth God know? . . . . the clouds are His covert; and He doth not consider our things; He walketh about the poles of heaven."[3] Quite the reverse. The Catholic religion brings God very near to us. We believe that "He made us, and not we ourselves"; that we are "the work of His hand." "I believe in God the Father almighty, Creator of

[1] Matt. xxviii, 19. [2] Ps. xxxv, 10. [3] Job xxii, 13, 14.

heaven and earth" our creed continues. This is the doctrine of creation. We believe further that, as St Augustine expresses it, "He did not make us and then leave us," as a sculptor makes a statue and leaves it exposed to the mercy of wind and rain and storm, but "He made us and remains with us." We believe in divine Providence watching over us, body and soul. There is no such a word as "chance" in the Christian dictionary; "haphazard" has no place in the vocabulary of a Catholic. God is far-seeing and far-reaching. The faith of the Catholic is the faith of the Psalmist: "The Lord lifteth up all that fall; and setteth up all that are cast down. The eyes of all hope in Thee, O Lord, and Thou givest them meat in due season. Thou openest Thy hand and fillest with blessing every living creature. . . . The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon Him; that call upon Him in truth."[1] This is what we call preservation, or conservation, or providence. According to the Catholic, "God is not far from every one of us; for in Him we live and move and are."[2] This is God's omnipresence or ubiquity.

God has revealed Himself to men. Sometimes He has appeared in mysterious ways to His servants: to Abraham in Mambre, to Jacob in Bethel, to Moses on Sinai. Almost from the beginning He has made known His ways and His will, by means of the scriptures or letters which He has bidden His prophets, and later on His apostles, to write to His children. From Genesis to Apocalypse, Catholics believe the bible to be God's message to them and to the world. Not only has God appeared mysteriously to some of His servants, and written or bidden others to write, as His scribes and secretaries, in His name, but He has actually, to prove His providence, come down Himself to men, "taking the form of a servant, being made to the likeness of a man."[3] But this mystery of the divine coming calls for a distinct chapter.

[1] Ps. cxliv, 14, 16. [2] Acts xvii, 28. [3] Phil. ii, 7.

CHAPTER III

THE INCARNATION

THE motive and the mystery of the incarnation are summarized by St Paul in his well-known words to the Hebrews: [1] "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spoke in times past to the fathers by the prophets, last of all, in these days, hath spoken to us by His Son, whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also He made the world." St John epitomizes it in the first chapter of his sublime gospel: "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt amongst us. . . . And the Word was with God, the Word was God." God became man. We may thus briefly sum up the history of the incarnation:

(a) Man fell from God by sin. We have the record of the fall in the book of Genesis.

(b) The fall being an infinite one, and the separation from God being likewise infinite, man could not of his own power rise again, nor could he return to the God whom he had abandoned. Redemption was beyond him.

(c) God, in His infinite mercy, missed His lost child who had gone astray, and promised to come and redeem him, i.e., to pay the price of his ransom. He promised this to Adam in the garden after the fall.[2] He repeated that promise in after times to Abraham,[3] to Isaac,[4] to Jacob.[5] He declared to Isaias the manner of His coming: "Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and His name shall be called Emmanuel,"[6] Emmanuel meaning "God with us."

[1] Heb. i, 1. [2] Gen. iii. [3] Gen. xxii.
[4] Gen. xxvi. [5] Gen. xxviii. [6] Ibid. vii, 14.

(d) Then the promises were realized: He came. "When the fulness of time had come God sent His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, that He might redeem those who were under the law; that we might receive the adoption of sons."[1] Here we have the ransom or redemption, and the return of the wandering child to the Father who missed him. The actual history of the coming is given by the evangelists, St Luke in his gospel[2] describing most circumstantially the manner of His coming—the birth, the angel messenger calling the shepherds, "the good tidings of great joy:" "This day is born to you a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord."

All this is part of the Catholic creed: "I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son our Lord, who was conceived of the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary." The mystery of the incarnation, God's coming into the world, His going from the world, His coming again, and the motive and meaning of His coming, His going and His coming again at the end of the world, are most clearly expressed by St Athanasius in the creed which goes by his name:

"Furthermore, it is necessary to everlasting salvation that he (the one who would be saved) also believe rightly the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ.

"Now the right faith is that we believe and confess that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is both God and man.

"He is God of the substance of His Father, begotten before the world; and He is man of the substance of His Mother, born in the world:

"Perfect God and perfect man; of reasonable soul and human flesh subsisting.

"Equal to the Father according to His Godhead; and less than the Father according to His manhood.

[1] Gal. iv, 4. [2] Chapter 1.

" Who, although He be both God and man, yet He is not two, but one Christ:

" One, not by the conversion of the Godhead into flesh, but by the taking of the manhood unto God:

" One altogether, not by confusion of substance, but by unity of person.

" For as the reasonable soul and the flesh is one man, so God and man is one Christ.

" Who suffered for our salvation, descended into hell, rose again the third day from the dead.

" He ascended into heaven; He sitteth at the right hand of God the Father almighty; from whence He shall come to judge the living and the dead.

" At whose coming all men shall rise again with their bodies, and shall give an account of their own works.

" And they that have done good shall go into life everlasting; and they that have done evil, into everlasting fire.

" This is the Catholic faith, which except a man believe faithfully and steadfastly, he cannot he saved."

Here we have the history of the incarnation. The mystery of the incarnate life implies three truths, all of which we Catholics " firmly and steadfastly believe "—(1) that our Lord was truly God; (2) that He was truly man; (3) that the divinity and the humanity were hypostatically united in Him. In other words, the two natures, the divine and the human, had not two distinct personalities, but they were united in the one divine personality of " the Word," or second person of the ever adorable Three. We reprobate and anathematize the heresies of Nestorius and Arius, who denied, the one the true humanity and its union with the Godhead, and the other the divinity of Jesus Christ our Lord.

1. His divinity He proved by His miracles. No man could do the things which He did if he were only a man. He proved it by His prophecies made and fulfilled to the letter. He proved it beyond a doubt by His resurrection.

from the dead, which no one could gainsay. He was God.

2. His humanity was evident. He was born, He grew from childhood to youth, and from youth to manhood; He ate, and drank, and talked, and walked, and wept, and worked; He bled, and suffered, and died. He was a man.

3. The union of humanity and divinity was clear. It was the same Jesus Christ who performed human actions and led a human life, and yet did divine things which only God could do, giving sight to the blind, speech to the dumb, hearing to the deaf, life even to the dead. He was God and man.

Ask the Catholic then, as our Lord asked His apostles: "Whom do you say that I am?" and he will answer with Peter: "Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God." And Christ will repeat the words which Peter heard in the quarters of Cesarea Philippi: "Blessed are thou . . . because flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but My Father who is in heaven.[1] This is the revelation which forms an article of our creed: "I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary."

Because He was "born of the Virgin Mary," bone of her bone, flesh of her flesh, blood of her blood, therefore, although she is only a creature and He is her Creator, we honour her, precisely because she is His mother.

> How can I rightly love Thy Son,
> Sweet mother, if I love not Thee?

We honour her with what we call a "relative" honour. What does that mean? It means that we give her honour because she is a relative of His, and His nearest relative. We honour her as we should honour the mother of a king, as we should reverence the mother of a hero, a conqueror, a great philanthropist, a "king amongst men." We do not give her *divine* honour,

[1] Matt. xvi.

because she is not God—nay, there is an infinite gap between her and God; but we know her to be His mother, because He who was the Son of God was yet "born of the Virgin Mary." He was born of a woman, and the woman was Mary. So we say with the angel: "Hail [Mary], full of grace; the Lord is with thee."[1] And with Elizabeth we cry out: "Blessed art thou amongst women,"[2] because "blessed is the fruit of thy womb," Jesus.

[1] Luke i, 28. [2] Ibid.

CHAPTER IV

THE REDEMPTION

THE work of Jesus Christ on earth is epitomized in the word which heads this chapter, Redemption. "He shall redeem His people from their sins"[1] was the angel's forecast. His name, "Jesus," embodies that work, for it means a Saviour or Redeemer. It was the name of God's naming. The angel messenger said to Mary: "Thou shalt call His name Jesus."[2] The name was accordingly given to Him at the circumcision, when He was but eight days old.[3] It hung over His cross when His work was done: "Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews."[4] He bears that name still in heaven: "Jesus standing at the right hand of God."[5]

1. He came to be Jesus our Saviour. In our Catholic creed we say, and we say it on bended knees: "Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven, and became incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and was made man." This is our belief.

Admitting the fall of man and the promise of redemption, the divine decree and promise necessitated our Lord's coming. Man could not redeem himself, though he could, and did, destroy himself. You may cast yourself into the mighty, roaring rapids of Niagara, but you cannot save yourself from destruction if you so do. You may throw yourself over a high precipice which overhangs the sea, but you cannot, maimed and wounded, and perhaps even dead, scramble up the cliffs again. So with man when in sin. He can sin, he does sin; but he cannot redeem himself from sin. He can contract a debt against God's justice, but he cannot repay the debt. He can offend God, and

[1] Matt. i, 21. [2] Luke i, 31. [3] Luke ii, 21.
[4] Matt. xxvii, 37. [5] Acts vii, 55.

separate himself from Him; but he cannot reconcile himself to God, nor bridge over the chaos of separation and so unite himself to God again. Nay, the very angels are helpless and powerless. Not even the brightest seraph, not the highest cherub, not even Michael, the archangel, who fought the dragon and overcame him, could ransom a single soul from a single grievous sin. The debt is *infinite*, only an infinite price can cancel it. The evil is *eternal*, only the Eternal can repair it. The injustice done to God only God can pardon. "No brother shall redeem, [yet] a man shall redeem,"[1] but that man must be God. "The land hath mourned and languished, Libanus is confounded, Saron has become as a desert, Basan and Carmel are shaken; now *I* will arise, saith the Lord."[2] And when He arose and came as man—but not till then—could a human act of satisfaction, of reparation, of atonement rise to God worthy of the Godhead. Then it arose; and this was redemption. Redemption began at Bethlehem; nay, before that, at Nazareth; and it was "consummated" on Calvary when the Redeemer said: "It is finished," and then "gave up the ghost." This is what Catholics believe: Christ died for all men, that all men might be saved; all will be saved if they walk in the way of salvation which He has marked out, and make use of the means of salvation which He has prescribed. It was for this our Lord suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried

2. Christ is still our mediator; the work of redemption still goes on. The cross, once growing in an eastern forest, and then cut down and formed into an instrument of death, was the scene of redemption, for upon it Christ died. But the sign of the cross and the effects of the crucifixion remain. The cross stood upon the hill of the skulls, outside the gate of the city; and the inscription upon it was in Hebrew, Greek and Latin, to show that the redemption was not for one nation and one people, but for all nations,

[1] Ps. xlviii, 8. [2] Isa. xxxiii, 9, 10.

all peoples, and for all time. The victim who was laid upon the cross, nailed to it, raised up on it, died upon it, and was then taken down from it and laid in a cheerless tomb, was the God of all ages. The shadow of that cross falls upon all peoples, for the redemption was "copious"; it was for all. That is why Catholics venerate the cross and multiply its images, and Catholic preachers preach it, and Catholic people sign themselves with it. That is why it is placed over our altars, and is raised high up on our towers and steeples and crowns our churches, and hangs in our rooms. That is why we kiss it with our lips, and wear it on our breasts, and die with it in our hands, and enshrine it in our hearts. The cross has taken away the sins of the world, has satisfied the justice of the Creator, has conquered hell and opened heaven. It has dispelled the dark shadows, and rolled back the clouds of sin, and revealed to us the majesty of God. The cross is the throne of the Redeemer and the sign of redemption. We keep it, therefore, and venerate it, because redemption still goes on, and still through the merits of the cross and the Crucified. He was crucified, died and was buried. "Even His tomb," as Père Lacordaire says so well, "is now the centre of the religious world; Mussulmans, Greeks, Protestants, Catholics guard it. All, gathered together from the four winds of heaven, agree to venerate the inanimate stone upon which the mangled body of Christ for three days and three nights reposed. A hundred battles have been fought around it; the destinies of the world have a score of times changed their aspect there; but defeat or victory has ever borne to it the homage of nations, and so many struggles have only served to glorify that fragile tomb where all come to prostrate themselves."[1]

3. We believe, further, in only one Redeemer, for "there is no other name under heaven whereby we can be saved"[2] than the name of Jesus. All our sacraments are

[1] Conference on *The Reign of Christ.* [2] Acts iv, 12.

administered in that name. All our liturgical prayers are made in that name, and end with the words: *Per Dominum nostrum Jesum Christum:* "Through our Lord Jesus Christ." Our churches are built in that name. Our altars are erected in its honour. The name runs through our religious rites and ceremonial as the woof through the woven web. We can say with St Paul: "There is one God and one mediator of God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a redemption for all."[1] These words of the apostle are sometimes quoted against us, but in vain. It is said that we make our Lady and the saints "mediators"; and so we do, but in what sense? Only as St Paul made himself a mediator for the Thessalonians: "Night and day praying more abundantly that we may see your face";[2] and as Mary made herself a mediator when she pleaded with her divine Son for the bride and bridegroom at Cana of Galilee;[3] and as we make ourselves mediators every time in the prayer which our Lord taught us to say, we pray for each other, saying "our" instead of "my," and "us" instead of "me." St Paul, Mary, the saints, we all are, and may be lawfully, mediators by intercession. Jesus alone is the mediator of justification and salvation. He alone is Jesus, i.e., the Saviour. We only ask; He alone gives. We pray for pardon; He alone can grant the forgiveness. In our litany we say: "Lord, *have mercy*," i.e., forgive us, take away our sin; but when we come to St Mary and the other saints, we change our form of expression: "Holy Mary, *pray for us;* St Michael, *pray for us.*" He alone is the mediator of salvation, the "one mediator of God and man." There is but one sun in the heavens; but there is a moon, which borrows and then reflects the borrowed light. There is but one king in a kingdom; but there are ministers who do his will, and there are courtiers who plead for favours. There is but one Christ,

[1] Tim. ii, 5. [2] Thess. iii, 10. [3] John ii.

the almighty Giver of good things; but there are myriads of Christians, on earth and in heaven, who pray for graces, and receive gifts from Him. All these graces, all these gifts are the fruits of His "copious redemption." There is but one mediator of justification and redemption, one who effectively unites earth to heaven, man to God; but there may be as many mediators by impetration and intercession as there are souls on earth and saints in heaven before the eternal throne. St Paul himself anticipated the objection which has been made nearly nineteen hundred years after his day; and as though forseeing the difficulty that would be raised, the apostle gave its solution: "There is one God and one mediator of God, the man Christ Jesus, *who gave Himself a redemption for all.*" He "gave Himself" as "a redemption" or as the Redeemer; all others simply make intercession and offer their good works, and hope for grace and pardon, whether for themselves or their fellow-men, through the merits of His redemption.

CHAPTER V

THE DIVINE TEACHER

1. The writer of the Acts of the Apostles sums up the life of our Lord, as related in the Gospel which came from the same inspired pen, in two words: "Jesus began to do and to teach."[1] "To do" refers to His work; "to teach" to His doctrine. His work was the work of redemption, begun at Bethlehem, "consummated" on Calvary, and continued, in its effects and fruits, throughout all time. As of His work, so of His teaching. It was not a doctrine for an hour, for an age, for a people; it was, like the divine Teacher, for all times and all peoples—"yesterday, to-day and the same for ever."[2] The mountain of Calvary was the mountain of all times, the centre of the ages, past, present and to come, and the centre of the entire world. So was the mountain of Sinai; so the mountain of the Beatitudes. Redemption, commandments, doctrine were equally for all; they were to be perpetuated to the end of time. Hence we Catholics venerate our Lord as the divine Teacher, and we admit of no teacher who propounds a doctrine contrary to his; such a man we anathematize as a heretic, and "a heretic" we "avoid."[3] This is what the world calls "intolerance"; and in this sense Catholics are intolerant. We should "avoid" even an angel if he taught a doctrine which was opposed to His word. This was the intolerance of St Paul: "Even though we, or an angel from heaven, preach a Gospel to you, beside that which we have preached to you, let him be anathema."[4] The faith of a Catholic and his reverence for the divine Teacher are the explanation of much that sometimes is a difficulty to those outside the

[1] Acts i, 1. [2] Heb. xiii, 8. [3] Tit. iii, 10. [4] Gal. i, 8.

Church, even as Christ crucified was "to the Jews a stumbling block and to the gentiles foolishness."[1] That we admit only one Church to be true; that we teach that all who are wilfully and knowingly outside of the Church which they believe to be true, are outside the pale of salvation; that we speak of the one Church as the Ark of Noe; that we refuse to agree with those who maintain that "one religion is as good as another," and that "it does not matter what religion a man professes provided he professes some creed." All these, which are brought as accusations against us, and are quoted as evidences of our bigotry and narrow-mindedness, are in reality the manifestations of our belief in our Lord as a divine Teacher. A divine teacher cannot contradict himself, else where is the divinity, or divine unity, seen? A divine teacher must necessarily be infallible, or where is the infallibility if his doctrine is "divided"? Divinity is essentially and eternally consistent. So "that which *appeareth* foolish of God is wiser than men: and that which *appeareth* weakness of God is stronger than men."[2] "I believe in Jesus Christ" is an article of the Catholic creed which is more pregnant with meaning than it at first sight seems. We believe *in* Jesus Christ, not simply in His existence, but *in* Him. When you believe in a man you trust him, you have confidence in him, in his word, his sincerity, his truthfulness, his fidelity. Such is our faith in the divine Teacher. He cannot err. He cannot lead into error. He cannot connive at error. Even for the sake of peace, He cannot tolerate contradictory doctrines, contradicting Churches, contrary creeds. *Ruat cœlum, fiat justitia*, in Gospel language reads, "Heaven and earth may pass away, but My words shall not pass away."[3] Faith in the divine Teacher is responsible for the exclusiveness of Catholics in their creed. Belief in His divinity makes it impossible for us to be anything but intolerant in matters

[1] 1 Cor. i, 23. [2] 1 Cor. i, 25. [3] Matt. xxiv, 25.

of faith. If "the Master said it," it is enough for us; everything else which contradicts the Master's word we reject and anathematize. "One Lord, one faith, one baptism" is the apostle's clear exposition of our Catholic creed. St Paul goes on to give the explanation of the secret of this unerring and unfailing unity: "One God, and Father of all, who is above all, and through all and in us all."[1] Divine teaching implies unity. The divine mind is one, and teaching is the expression or reflection of the mind. The doctrine, consequently, of the divine Teacher must needs be one; it cannot be contradictory, or even tolerant of contrariety. A multiplicity of divine creeds is a contradiction in terms; one only can be divine, all others must be human. A divided apostolate ceases by its division to be the apostolate of the one divine Master. Many churches, professing varying creeds, cannot all be the mouth-pieces of God; one may be, all cannot be. Truth is intolerant of division; it cannot say "Yea, yea," and "No, no" of the same thing and at the same time. So must the lover of truth be intolerant of error. Unity of doctrine is implied in the divinity of the teacher.

2. Another characteristic of our Lord's teaching, which results from the fact of His being our Lord, is its sublimity. "Never did man speak as this Man speaketh,"[2] they said of Him; and they were right, for He alone of all men was God. "The words which I have spoken to you are spirit and life."[3] Looking up to heaven He said: "The words which Thou gavest Me I gave to them."[4] "My doctrine is not Mine, but His that sent Me,"[5] and therefore divine and, consequently, sublime. How full of divine pathos are the parables—the parables of the good shepherd; of the father who had a prodigal son; of the woman who had lost the piece of money; of the sower going to sow the seed; of the leaven hid in the

[1] Eph. iv, 5, 6. [2] John vii, 46. [3] John vi, 64.
[4] John xvii, 8. [5] John vii, 16.

meal; of the cockle in the cornfield; of the mustard-seed which grew into a tree; of the ten virgins; of the hidden treasure; of the wedding garment; of the tower and the warring king! How forcible His similes—the narrow gate; the mote and the beam; the wolf in sheep's clothing; the city on the hill; the narrow way leading to life and the broad way to destruction! How singularly beautiful with heavenly poetry are His lessons from nature, lessons taught by the God of nature. "Consider the lilies of the field how they grow: they labour not, neither do they spin, yet Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed as one of these"; and then the lesson, "If God so clothe the grass of the field, . . . how much more you, O ye of little faith."[1] "Behold the birds of the air, for they sow not, neither do they reap nor gather into barns: yet your heavenly Father feedeth them." Again the practical conclusion of confidence in God: "Are not you of much more value than they?" "Lift up your eyes and see the countries, for they are white already to harvest." Then He says to His apostles: "I have sent you to reap that in which you did not labour, others have laboured, and you have entered into their labours; it is one man that soweth, and it is another that reapeth, that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together."[2] "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that kovest the prophets and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I not have gathered thy children together, as the hen gathereth her chickens under her wings; but thou wouldst not?"—What then? "Behold thy house shall be left to thee desolate."[3]

Could any teaching be more sublime, more pathetic, more beautiful and, withal, more practical and fruitful? No wonder the people said: "Never did man speak as this man." No wonder Peter exclaimed, when Jesus asked at Capharnaum: "Will you also go away?" "Lord, to whom

[1] Matt. vi, 30. [2] John iv, 36. [3] Matt. xxiii, 37, 38.

shall we go, for Thou hast the words of eternal life?"[1] Even those who have "denied Him before men" have been constrained at times to bear witness both to the divinity of His life, and the sublimity of His doctrine. Rousseau, the oracle of modern anti-Christians, was but expressing the sentiments of other professed unbelievers when he wrote:[2]

"I acknowledge to you that the majesty of the scriptures strikes me with admiration; the sanctity of the Gospel speaks to my heart. Read the works of the philosophers with all their pomp of diction: how mean, how contemptible they are when compared to the Gospel! Is it possible that a book, at once so simple and so sublime, should merely be the work of a *man?* Is it possible the sacred Personage whose history it contains should be a *mere man?* Is the love He secured that of an enthusiast or an ambitious sectary? What severity, what sweetness, what purity in His manners! What a touching peacefulness is His mode of instruction! What loftiness in His maxims! What profound wisdom in His discourses! What presence of mind, what subtlety what exactness in His replies! How great the command over His passions!

"Where is the philosopher who could so live and so die without weakness and without ostentation? When Plato describes his imaginary *good man*, bowed with all the shame of guilt and yet meriting the highest reward of virtue, he describes exactly the character of Jesus Christ; the resemblance was so striking that all the fathers perceived it.

"What prepossession, what blindness must it be to compare the son of Sophroniscus (Socrates) to the Son of Mary (Jesus)! What an infinite disproportion between one and the other! Socrates, dying without pain, without ignominy, easily supports his character to the end. If his death, however easy, had not done honour to his life, it might have

[1] John vi, 69.

[2] Emile t. 3, p. 137. Letter to Archbishop of Paris, 1763.

been doubted whether Socrates, with all his wisdom, had been anything more than a vain sophist. He invented, it is true, the system of morals; others before him had put them in practice. He had only, therefore, to say what they had done, and reduce their examples to precepts. Aristides had been just before Socrates had defined what justice was; Leonidas had died for his country before Socrates declared patriotism to be a duty; the Spartans were a sober people before Socrates recommended sobriety; Greece abounded in virtuous men before he defined virtue. But where could Jesus Christ learn among His countrymen that pure and sublime morality of which He alone has given both example and precept?

"The most sublime wisdom made itself known amidst the most bigoted fanaticism, and the simplicity of the most heroic virtues did honour to the vilest people on earth. The death of Socrates, peacefully philosophizing with his friends, appears the most agreeable that could be wished for; that of Jesus, expiring in the midst of agonizing pains, abused, insulted and accused by a whole nation, is the most horrible that could be feared. Socrates, in receiving the cup of poison, blessed indeed the weeping executioner who ministered it; but Jesus, in the midst of His torments, prayed for His merciless tormentors. Yes, if the life and death of Socrates were those of a sage, the life and death of Jesus Christ are those of a God. Shall we say that the history of the Gospel is a mere fiction? Indeed, it has nothing like a fiction in it; on the contrary, the history of Socrates, which nobody doubts, is not so well attested as that of Jesus Christ; such a supposition, in fact, only shifts the difficulty without removing it. It is more inconceivable that a number of persons should agree to forge such a history than that One should form the subject of it. The Jewish authors were incapable of such diction and such morality; and the Gospel has such characters of truth, so grand, so striking, so perfectly inimitable, that the

inventor of such a history would be a greater wonder than the Hero Himself."

Nothing can be more beautiful or eloquent than this testimony. What a pity that the paradoxical writer of it should, in other parts of his writings, have endeavoured, by his contradictions, to destroy the effect of this charming passage!

3. Believers and unbelievers alike must confess that Jesus is "Christ, the Son of the living God," and that He has "the words of eternal life." The unity of His teaching and its sublimity both result from the divinity of the Teacher. Another evidence of that divinity is the perpetuity of His doctrine. "My words, which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever."[1] And the divine Teacher Himself has foretold: "My words shall not pass away."[2]

The words have not passed away, they have gone from generation to generation, from age to age, from the mouth of the seed to the mouth of the seed's seed, and will from henceforth and for ever. Our Lord's life is perpetual, so is His teaching. It is perpetuated, as we shall proceed to show, (1) in the holy scriptures; (2) in the sacred traditions of His faithful children in all ages; (3) in His divinely appointed Church and the preaching of her ministers; (4) in the infallible utterances of the visible head of the Church; (5) in the sacraments of the Church; (6) in her very rites and ceremonies; (7) in her practices and devotions; and so from the divine Teacher to "his seed, and from his seed to his seed's seed from henceforth and for evermore."

[1] Isa. lix, 21. [2] Matt. xxiv, 35.

CHAPTER VI

HOLY SCRIPTURE

THE sacred scripture is one of the means, though not, as some would have it, the only means, by which and through which God makes known His will to men, and perpetuates His teaching in the world. The Catholic Church most firmly believes in the bible, most reverently venerates the bible, and most assiduously, though prudently, promulgates and disseminates the bible. In the creed of Pope Pius IV, which was drawn up at the conclusion of the Council of Trent (A.D. 1545 to 1563), the Church makes this profession of faith: "I also admit the holy scriptures, according to that sense which our holy Mother the Church has held, and does hold, to whom it belongs to judge of the true interpretation of the scriptures; neither will I ever take and interpret them otherwise than according to the unanimous sense of the fathers."

The Vatican Council framed two definitions upon the possibility, respectively, and the necessity, of revelation. Of the possibility there can be no doubt raised. God can speak to man if He wills to do so. "If any one shall say that it is impossible or useless for man to be taught by revelation concerning God, and the worship to be paid to Him, let him be anathema."[1] "If any one shall say that man cannot be raised by God to a higher than natural knowledge, but that he can and ought, of himself, by continuous progress, to arrive at the possession of all truth and all goodness, let him be anathema."[2] When we speak of the necessity of revelation we do not for a moment imply that God is under any obligation to man; we simply emphasize man's need of revelation, on the supposition that

[1] Cap. ii, Can. 2. [2] Ibid., Can. 3.

he has been raised to a higher or supernatural state. The sphere is above his natural sphere, the truths, therefore, of that order are above his natural ken, and he depends upon God's manifestation if he is to know them at all. He cannot "of himself, by continuous progress, arrive at the possession of all truth and all goodness." If, therefore, he is to arrive at this possession, it must be by God making it known. Such revelation is not of absolute, but of relative, necessity. Supposing man, lifted up to the supernatural order, is to have supernatural knowledge, then there is only one way in which such knowledge can come to him, and that is the way of revelation.

1. The Meaning of Scripture

THE word *scripture* means *written words.* When we speak of the "sacred scriptures" or "holy writing" we mean the written word of God. These words of God were written, either at the dictation or by the inspiration of the divine Teacher, by secretaries whom we call by different names, according to the periods in which they lived or the nature of the words which they were commissioned to write. Some were "prophets," like Moses, who, in part at least if not in its entirety, wrote the Pentateuch, or Isaias, who foretold many things relating to the Jewish people and the coming of the Messias. Others are called "evangelists," because they wrote the evangels, or gospels, and were the historians of our Lord's life and times. Others again, amongst the apostles, wrote epistles or letters to different people and, through them, to the entire world. St John wrote the *Apocalypse*, or Book of the Revelations, which were made to him on the island of Patmos, some sixty-four years after our Lord's ascension into heaven.

2. The Canon of Scripture

THE Council of Trent, which is accepted by the Catholic Church as one of the nineteen œcumenical or

general councils, in the 4th session drew up the following decree, enumerating the books which Catholics are bound to admit as "canonical" or "inspired." This decree is printed at the beginning of our Catholic bibles.

"The holy œcumenick and general Council of Trent, in the Holy Ghost lawfully assembled, the three aforesaid legates of the Apostolic See presiding therein, having always this in view that all errors being taken away, the purity of the gospel should be preserved in the Church; that gospel,[1] before promised by prophets in the holy scriptures, our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, first promulgated with His own mouth; and afterwards commanded his apostles "to preach the same to all nations,"[2] as the source of every saving truth and moral discipline; and the synod clearly seeing that this truth and discipline is contained in the written word, and in the unwritten traditions, which the apostles received from the mouth of Christ Himself, or from the[3] apostles themselves, being the dictate of the Holy Ghost to them, and delivered, as it were, from hand to hand, came down to us: following the examples of the orthodox fathers, with due veneraton and piety receiving all the books as well of the Old as of the New Testament, seeing that God is the author of both, and also receiving these traditions, appertaining to faith and morals, as coming from the mouth of Christ or dictated by the Holy Ghost and held in the Catholic Church by a continued succession. The synod, therefore, thought proper to annex to this decree a catalogue of the sacred books, lest any doubt might arise concerning those that were approved of. They are the following: "Of the Old Testament, the five books of Moses, that is, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy; Josue, Judges, Ruth, the four books of Kings, two of Paralipomenon, first and second of Esdras (the second book is called Nehemias), Tobias, Judith, Esther, Job, the Psalter of David, in number one

[1] Jer. xxxi. 33. [2] Mark xvi, 15. [3] 2 Thess. ii, 14,

hundred and fifty Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, the Canticle of Canticles, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Isaias, Jeremias, with Baruch, Ezechiel, Daniel, the twelve minor prophets, that is, Osee, Joel, Amos, Abdias, Jonas, Micheas, Nahum, Habacuc, Sophonias, Aggeus, Zacharias, Malachias, two books of the Machabees, first and second. Of the New Testament, four gospels, according to Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, the Acts of the Apostles written by Luke the Evangelist: the fourteen Epistles of Paul the Apostle: to the Romans, two to the Corinthians, to the Galatians, to the Ephesians, to the Philippians, to the Colossians, two to the Thessalonians, two to Timothy, to Titus, to Philemon, to the Hebrews: two Epistles of Peter the Apostle, three of John the Apostle, one of James the Apostle, one of Jude the Apostle, and the Apocalypse of John the Apostle. Now if any one, reading over these books in all their parts, as they are usually read in the Catholic Church, and being in the Latin Vulgate edition, does not hold them for sacred and canonical, and knowing the aforesaid traditions, does industriously contemn them, let him be anathema."

3. The Integrity of Scripture

CATHOLICS are bound to keep absolutely inviolate the integrity of the sacred scriptures. They must accept the sacred book in its every part as being the written word of God. A Protestant reading the list or Canon given above will see several books which do not occur in his own bible, e.g., Ecclesiasticus, the Book of Wisdom and the two Books of the Maccabees, which in his own bible are numbered amongst the "Apocryphal" books. Again, in some parts of the bible he will find a verse, or several verses, which are omitted both in the older editions and the "Revised Version" of the Anglican church. Why this is so, opens out a question beyond the scope of a book which only professes to give the articles

of the Catholic creed. Suffice it, for our purpose, to say that Catholics are bound to accept, with mind and heart, the whole of revelation, whether it coincides with their preconceived views or contradicts them, whether it is beyond their understanding or within their comprehension, whether it contains passages which militate against their own doctrinal theories or not. A Catholic may not, as Luther did, call the Epistle of St James "an Epistle of straw," because it happens to contradict a statement or opinion of his own; nor may he speak lightly of the Apocalypse, because he affects to imagine that the writer does not give sufficient prominence to our Lord.

"History repeats itself," we are told. There is a history recorded in the Book of Jeremias, the prophet,[1] which has often verified that saying. At the bidding of the prophet, Baruch, the son of Nerias, "wrote from the mouth of Jeremias all the words of the Lord which he spoke him, upon the roll of a book." As Jeremias was "shut up"—i.e., in prison—he further commanded Baruch to read the written words in the temple, in the hearing of all Juda, which he did. This having come to the knowledge of Joakim, the king, he sent for the book, that it might be read to him. Finding that the roll contained denunciations unpalatable to himself, he took the book from Juda, the leader, and "cut it with a penknife, and he cast it into the fire that was upon the hearth, till the volume was consumed." There have been Joakims in all ages; there are Joakims to-day. Some do not approve of the bible at all, it is above and beyond them. What then? "They cast it into the fire that is upon the hearth till the volume is consumed." They do not need a bible, they are wiser than God; they have the light of reason, that is enough for them, they can dispense with revelation. So thinks the savage in Borneo, and then he eats his brother; so say the Brahmins in India,

[1] Chapter xxxvi.

and then they cut their bodies with knives; so think the Chinese, and the pagodas, with their barbarities, are the outcome! Others agree with the bible on the whole, but they "do not hold with" a particular book, or a chapter, or a verse: it contradicts their opinions, it is at variance with their creed, it condemns their manner of living. What more simple? They take their penknives, like Joakim, and cut out the book, the chapter, the verse. The history of Jonas seems to be too weird and strange to be true—then "cut it out." They do not believe in praying for the dead; but there is a passage in the book of Machabees which speaks approvingly of the practice—then "reject it." They are not sure about their faith in the mystery of the Blessed Trinity; it is so difficult to understand. Yet there is a strong passage in favour of it in the First Epistle of St John. "Eliminate it," "Cut it out," "It is apocryphal," "It is an interpolation," "It is not found in some of the Greek manuscripts, nor in some of the Eastern versions, not even in all the Latin codices. Don't wait for the judgement of any Church. Draw a pen through it."

It is very easy to write the word "interpolation," or to speak it; but it is no easy matter actually to interpolate scripture. If it is an interpolation, we may be pardoned for asking: Who interpolated? When? Where? Since the first century has the Church, and have Christians, passed through a Rip Van Winkle century, when the Church, and Christians, have been all asleep? If so, no doubt interpolation was the order of that century. If not, how did the interpolation get in? Could a man, without our knowing it, interpolate an Act of Parliament, or suppress a clause, or add a clause to the Education Act; or even insert a chapter, or omit a chapter, in one of Dickens's novels? Even so with the Bible, part of which the Jews, and the whole of which Christians, have ever guarded and preserved as their greatest treasure, and the most sacred deposit

entrusted to their care. Would they look on passively and supinely whilst the work of interpolation was going on? Or when the work was done, would they fail to recognize the writing of another hand, the work of either the penknife or the pen? Or would they calmly acquiesce in what they knew to be a sacrilegious fraud?

Once for all, this is part of her Creed: the Catholic Church holds as sacred the integrity of the scriptures. No Catholic may add to, or detract from, God's word one jot or tittle. From Genesis to Apocalypse the Catholic must accept and admit every book and every chapter. He must hold for sacred these books *in all their parts* as they are usually read in the Catholic Church.

4. Inspiration of Scripture

Our jealousy of the scripture and our sacred guardianship of its every word arises from our faith in its inspiration. It is not the word of man, it is the word of God. "My Word" God calls it; "God's Word" or "the Word of God" is the name by which the Catholic knows it best.

1. What do we mean when we say, and we Catholics do say, that the bible is "inspired"? The literal meaning of the word "inspired" is breathed, and of the word "inspiration" breathing—the breathing of the spirit. We may define the inspiration of scripture, in the Catholic sense, as an illumination of the judgement of a man by the divine Spirit, and an impulse of the will of the writer by the Holy Ghost, "the Spirit of Truth," moving him to write, or enlightening his mind and dictating to him *what* he shall write; sometimes dictating the sense of the passage, sometimes the very words in which the message is to be delivered; sometimes even prompting the introduction into the sacred page, of historic facts and scientific truths—or what, at the time, are generally accepted as such—which are not revealed by God, and, in themselves, do not necessarily form part of the deposit of faith. Sometimes the Holy Spirit may unite

revelation to inspiration. Inspiration does not, however, invariably imply revelation. The two terms—*inspiration* and *revelation*—are not synonymous. They are by no means convertible. A writer may be inspired to write something which is not, therefore, and does not become thereby, a truth of revelation. This distinction, properly understood, will solve many difficulties which occur in the interpretation of the sacred text. All scripture is not revelation. All divine scripture, however, is inspired.

St Chrysostom, referring to St Luke, the writer of the Acts of the Apostles, says that "the Holy Ghost was in him"[1] when he wrote. St Augustine says of the evangelists generally: "Christ ordered them to write, as it were with His own hand all that He wished us to read of His words and works."[2] Of St John the same saintly doctor writes: "John spoke because he was inspired. Had he not been inspired, he would have said nothing; but being an inspired man he said not everything, but only such things as a man could say."[3] St Paul himself speaks of "all scriptures" as being "divinely inspired."[4] God makes man His secretary, and bids him write for Him. The scriptures are God's work. Some of the holy fathers speak of them as "letters from God," "divine scriptures." God acts upon the writers, moves them, impels them, tells them what to say, and, at times, how to say it, sometimes even dictating the words in which to say it. Hence we call scripture "the Word of God."

The Council of Trent, in the decree which we have already quoted,[5] says that "God is the author of both," the Old and New Testaments, "and that they come from the mouth of Christ, or are dictated by the Holy Ghost." The fathers of the Vatican Council, speaking of the books of scripture, say: "These the Church holds to be sacred and canonical, not because, having been carefully composed

[1] *Hom. in Act. Ap.* i, 1, 2. [2] *De Consens. Evang.* lib. I, n. 35.
[3] *In Joan. Tract.* 1, n. 1. [4] 2 Tim. iii, 16. [5] Page 30.

by mere human industry, they were afterwards approved by her authority, not merely because they contain revelation without any admixture of error, but because, having been written by *the inspiration of the Holy Ghost*, they have *God for their Author*, and have been delivered, as such, to the Church herself. The council declares him to be anathema who shall deny that they have been divinely inspired."[1]

2. The belief of the Church in their divine inspiration is one of the reasons why she has ever, through the ages, preserved the scriptures as her most solemn deposit and sacred heritage. After her guardianship of the divine presence in the Blessed Sacrament, her greatest treasure has ever been divine truth embodied in the written word, and manifested by her ever-living voice. Our reverence for God's word is evidenced, again, by the fact that we do not spread it broadcast as "pearls before swine," for we believe every syllable to be as a pearl from heaven, as a jewel from the throne of God. We do not give it to little children in the school to ridicule, to learn garbled extracts from it, to select passages which to the pure are pure, but which, seen with unholy eyes and read with minds that are not pure, may do harm instead of good. We do not leave it in the waiting-rooms of railway stations for every scoffer to revile; nor do we sell it as though it were so much waste paper, so that tradesmen can wrap their goods in its sacred leaves. We are descendants of the saints, and they ever read the bible with reverence and respectful love. St Felix, a saintly bishop in Africa, died rather than give up the bible to the pagan. St Euplius was led to execution with a copy of the Gospels suspended around his neck. Our own Venerable Bede wrote: "I have been in this monastery since I was seven years old, and during all that time I have given my mind to meditation on the holy scriptures," and he died as he was dictating the translation of the Gospel of St John. St Dominic carried with him,

[1] Sess. III, cap. ii, Can. 4.

wherever he went, the Epistles of St Paul. St Charles read the scriptures on bended knees with head uncovered. The monks of the Catholic Church, centuries before printing was invented, centuries, too, before Luther or Calvin or the Protestant Church, in any of its different and differing forms, was born, copied out the bible, letter by letter, in the scriptorium of their monastery, and thus preserved the sacred books from oblivion and destruction. Had it not been for the guardianship of the Catholic Church during fifteen centuries there would have been no bible at all. She guarded it and preserved it from the ravages of time, and she hands it down to us to-day as her most treasured heirloom, her inheritance from her divine Founder and Guide. All this is proof, if proof were needed, that the Catholic Church loves the bible, and esteems it as the sacred and inspired word of the all-holy and ever-living God. Her priests repeat, on every day of the three hundred and sixty-five which form the Christian year, the words of the inspired prophet, words which sum up the Church's scriptural creed: "Thy word is a lamp to my feet, and a light to my paths."[1]

5. The Reading of Scripture

BELIEVING all that we have said about the Catholic faith in the inspiration of scripture, realizing, consequently, the reverence which Catholics owe to God's word, the Church would be inconsistent indeed, she would be wanting in herduty both to God and His children, did she, as some falsely assert, forbid Catholics to read what she believes to be the holy word of God. This assertion is unjust, and where it is not a calumny, it is a fallacy. It has no foundation, in fact, and cannot be borne out by history.

The ministers of the Church not only may, but must, read the scriptures; not only sometimes, but always. They

[1] Ps. cxviii, 105.

are bound, under pain of grave and grievous sin, to read portions of the Bible every day unless prevented by some serious and sufficient cause. Can this be said of the ministers of any other Church? Yet it is a canon of our Catholic ecclesiastical law. What is the divine office, which priests and cloistered monks, and many orders of religious women, are under an obligation to say each day? What is the Breviary, which must be their *vade mecum*, their inseparable companion at home and abroad, at their work, and even during their well-earned holidays? It is made up for the most part of the divine scriptures, the psalms, the books of the Old Testament, the epistles and gospels, and the Apocalypse of St John? What again is the holy Mass which is said by priests each day? Introit, Epistle, Gradual, Gospel, Offertory, Communion—all invariably portions of the sacred book. What are the liturgical services of the Catholic Church—Vespers, Compline and the rest? Again the divine word, the "lamp to the feet," and "the light to the paths."

And when from priests we come to laymen, we repeat that never have even Catholic laymen been forbidden to read the scriptures, either in Latin or in the vernacular. Restrictions may have been put upon the reading; they may have been enjoined to read with certain safeguards; they may have been warned that they must interpret according to the Catholic teaching; they may have been admonished to read the bible with notes, explanatory of passages that are obscure—this we admit, and this we uphold and defend. But the restriction has not been upon the reading. Upon the false exposition or private interpretation? Yes. Upon the reading? No. At the beginning of our English Catholic bible there is inserted a letter written by Pope Pius VI to the then Archbishop of Florence, congratulating him upon his Italian translation of the bible, and bidding him to "excite" the people to read it.

"POPE PIUS THE SIXTH.

"Beloved Son, Health and Apostolical Benediction.

"At a time when a vast number of bad books, which most grossly attack the Catholic religion, are circulated, even among the unlearned, to the great destruction of souls, you judge exceedingly well that the faithful should be excited to the reading of the holy scriptures, *for these are the most abundant sources which ought to be left open to every one*, to draw from them purity of morals and of doctrine, to eradicate the errors which are so widely disseminated in these corrupt times. This you have seasonably effected, as you declare, by publishing the sacred writings in the language of your country, suitable to every one's capacity, especially when you show and set forth that you have added explanatory notes, which, being extracted from the holy fathers, preclude every possible danger of abuse. Thus you have not swerved either from the laws of the congregation of the Index or from the Constitution published on this subject by Benedict XIV, that immortal pope, our predecessor in the pontificate, and formerly when we held a place near his person, our excellent master in ecclesiastical learning; circumstances which we mention as honourable to us. We therefore applaud your eminent learning, joined with your extraordinary piety, and we return you our due acknowledgement for the books you have transmitted to us, and which, when convenient, we will read over. In the meantime, as a token of our pontifical benevolence, receive our apostolical benediction, which to you, beloved son, we very affectionately impart. Given at Rome, on the kalends of April, 1778, the fourth year of our pontificate.

"Philip Buonamici, Latin Secretary.

"To our beloved son, Antony Martini at Turin."

The following brief emanating from the late sovereign pontiff, Leo XIII, is a proof of the "continuity" of the

Church's encouragement to her children to read the holy scriptures, and is another evidence that, far from restraining Catholics from reading the word of God, the Catholic Church offers them spiritual inducements to "search the scriptures" and, under proper guidance, to find in them "eternal life":

"His Holiness Leo XIII, at an audience on December 13, 1898, with the undersigned prefect of the Congregation of Indulgences and Relics, made known that he grants to all the faithful who shall have devoutly read the scriptures for at least a quarter of an hour an indulgence of three hundred days, to be gained once a day, provided that the edition of the gospel has been approved by legitimate authority. Furthermore, the sovereign pontiff grants monthly a plenary indulgence to all those who shall have read in this way every day of the month. It can be gained on the day of the month when, after confession and communion, those who have fulfilled the conditions shall have offered up the customary prayers for the intentions of the Holy See. Given at Rome on December 13, 1898.

"F. Jerom M. Cardinal Gotti, Prefect."

This is the Church's teaching, not in theory only but in practice. If at times the *indiscriminate* reading of the bible has been proscribed, it has only been *indiscriminate* reading, when such reading endangered in the reader the faith or reverence due to the holy word. Then was it ordered that the bible was not to be read without prayer for light to understand, that it must be accompanied by commentary or notes explanatory of its meaning, and that it was to be read

With pure eyes and Christian hearts.

Who does not know of an instance, or of instances, where the neglect of these salutary admonitions has led to danger to the faith or the morality of the reader? The

reading is good, excellent, divine; but the reader has been unholy or unwise; he has read with eyes that were dim and mind that was not lowly, and heart that was not clean, and so, being "unstable and unlearned," he has "wrested" what he has read to his own "perdition"[1] instead of to his sanctification. The food is good, excellent, divine, most sound, most healthy and most health-giving; but the digestion is sometimes defective, and the food, good in itself, brings on indigestion in the receiver. The wine is old, but the bottle is new and unseasoned, and so it breaks. The piece of cloth is new and strong, but the garment is old and rotten, and "it taketh away what was whole from the garment, and the rent is made worse."[2] This salutary restriction of the Church upon indiscriminate reading without a proper safeguard is but further evidence of her reverence for the divine word.

6. Interpretation of Scripture

THE Catholic Church does not admit the principle of private judgement in matters of faith, nor, as a consequence, does she allow private interpretation of scripture. She does not leave it to each individual to decide what is, and what is not, the meaning of the word of God. This is one of her safeguards by which she prevents her children from "wresting the scriptures to their own perdition." In the creed of Pope Pius IV, already cited,[3] she professes to believe the scriptures "according to the sense which our holy Mother, the Church, has held, and does hold; to whom it belongs to judge of the true interpretation of the scriptures." The Council of Trent[4] proclaims the same doctrine in the same terms, adding other words of equal force: "No one, relying on his own skill in matters of faith and of morals pertaining to the edification of Christian doctrine, wresting the sacred scriptures to his own senses, shall presume to interpret the said sacred scriptures contrary to the sense which holy Mother Church . . . . hath held and doth hold." The latest

[1] 2 Pet. iii, 16. [2] Matt. ix, 16, 17. [3] Page 3. [4] Sess. IV.

general council, that of the Vatican, held in 1870, "renewing the said decree," enforces it in like manner.

It is not difficult to see the wisdom and, indeed, if we are to have unity of creed, the necessity of this law. Individual interpretation is more than dangerous, it is destructive of unity, whether of faith or morality, whether in theory or in practice. The Church was not long in discovering this. Amongst the Jews in pre-Christian times individual judgement had created sects. In the early, nay the earliest, Church it had the same suicidal consequences. St Peter himself alludes to it. Speaking of the epistles of his co-apostle, St Paul, "our most dear brother Paul," and the same applies to the other sacred writings, he says, "in which are some things hard to be understood, which the unlearned and the unstable wrest, *as also the other scriptures*, to their own perdition."[1] The Eunuch of Ethiopia was "a man of great authority,"[2] a man of no mean parts; he was a wise man withal. Philip, the apostle, seeing him sitting in his chariot reading Isaias the prophet, asked him: "Thinkest thou that thou understandest what thou readest?" He replied, and here we see his wisdom, "How can I unless some one show me?" Philip interpreted the difficult passage; and, receiving his profession of faith, baptized him. Nowadays men would learn more of the truths of God, if they would only confess that they knew less.

This self-sufficiency is a stumbling block to many. They "wrest the scriptures to their own perdition." St Jerome puts it strongly in the preface to his translation of the bible,[3] "A wrong explanation changes the word of God into the word of a man, and, what is worse, into the word of the devil, for the devil himself could quote scripture." Tertullian's word is almost stronger, but equally true: "Were there no scriptures, there would be no heresies."[4]

[1] 2 Pet. iii, 16. [2] Acts viii, 27.
[3] c. v [4] *De Præser. Hæres.* xiv, 39.

Why? Because heresies are false interpretations of scripture. We might say in the same manner: "Were there no truth, there would be no error." Why again? Because error is deviation from, or perversion of truth. The scripture teaches truth. Man's judgement of scripture is sometimes heresy and error. How forcibly do the words of Tertullian appeal to us in England, to our brethren in America, Germany, Holland, anywhere and everywhere, where the shock from the religious upheaval of three centuries ago is still felt, where the evil consequences of that upheaving are still experienced? In England and Wales alone there are, at the lowest computation, one hundred and eighty sects, or religious denominations, professing to be the true religion of Christ. "Were there no scriptures," no individual interpretation of scriptures that is, "there would be no heresies." Why, in one and the same English home, do you often find as many religions represented as there are members of the family—the father "Low Church," the mother "High Church," one son a Baptist, another a Unitarian, one daughter a Wesleyan, another a member of the Salvation Army? The source of this division is private interpretation of scripture. Why, although in the Catholic Church there is only one meaning to the words of our Lord, "This is My Body," outside the Church are there eighty; the late Archbishop of Canterbury himself acknowledging several, and admitting two as lawful and not contrary to Anglican teaching?[1] It is because "every one abounds in his own sense" as to the meaning of the word of God.

If the fathers of the Tridentine Council, or if Pope Pius IV could rise from their long-closed tombs and visit our England of to-day, they would find that their decree and their creed were more far-seeing and far-reaching than they, in their wildest dreams, could possibly have anticipated.

[1] *Charge delivered at his First Visitation by Archbishop Temple*, 1898.

They would see men, learned men, men of mind and piety, "wresting the scriptures to their own perdition." They would see homes "divided against themselves" upon the subject of all subjects the most sacred; families dissolved into sects; kingdoms at religious war with each other; counties and countries ever separated into spiritual factions; no peace, no unity either of faith or practice. And why, forsooth? St Jerome has told us, and Tertullian has confirmed his words. St Peter has given us the reason. St Paul adds his testimony. Reading the same book, inspired by the same divine Spirit, they interpret it, each for himself. Hence are they as "children tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, in the wickedness of men, in craftiness by which they lie in wait to deceive."[1]

"As the heavens are exalted above the earth, so are My ways above your ways and My thoughts above your thoughts, saith the Lord."[2] And words, written or spoken, are the revealed thoughts. Can we be astonished, then, if it is beyond the power of every cobbler, every tinker, every tailor, though skilled enough in the making of shoes, or pots and pans, or clothes, to fathom the deep depths and reach the lofty heights of the thoughts and words of God? This is what the Catholic Church teaches when she forbids private judgement and individual interpretation of scripture. Classical scholars dispute about the meaning of words and passages of Homer, Horace, Ovid and Virgil. Philosophers of light and learning disagree as to the precise teaching of Aristotle and Plato. Shrewd, clever, educated men cannot interpret our English law; they must have an army of lawyers, benches of magistrates and learned judges; even they are not infallible, there still remains the Court of Chancery; higher still the Court of Appeal; above that once more the Lords of Appeal, to decide either the meaning or the practical application of a

[1] Eph. iv, 14. [2] Isa. lv, 9.

human law. How limited is our natural knowledge. A cute lawyer is puzzled by his family doctor's prescription; an eminent physician cannot understand an ordinary lawyer's brief; a celebrated mathematician stands open-mouthed before the intricate mechanicism of a Waterbury watch; a Newton or a Bacon would have looked aghast if they had been called upon on a Sunday morning to preach a village prone. And yet, anyone, every one, a child, a nobody may interpret God's holy and divine word, may understand its hidden sense, may fathom its mysterious depths, may safely, without stumbling or falling, climb to its giddy heights! Priests, who have made the scriptures a life study, are often at a loss to understand a text. Biblical professors, who have grown grey and white in exegetical study, and whose *metier* it is to interpret scripture, dispute amongst themselves as to the meaning of a passage or a word. The Jews read the scriptures, and yet failed to recognize the Messiah when He came. Protestants profess to understand the scriptures, yet not one can tell us who is the visible and acknowledged head, or who ought to be, of his church. St Augustine, beyond the shadow of a doubt, was both a learned man and a spiritual man, yet he admitted that, though in the bible there was much that was clear to him, there was more which he did not understand.

The bible is a dead letter. It needs a living voice to give it life and meaning. The Church, guided by the Holy Ghost, is the living voice. She allows and encourages the reading of the holy book, but she reserves to herself the right to interpret ambiguous and obscure passages, and to decide disputed points of interpretation. She refuses to allow that each or any of her children may think as he likes, and judge as he likes about the meaning of the Master's word. From her first visible head, after her divine founder, she has learned that "No prophecy of scripture is made by private interpretation. For prophecy came not by the will of man at any time; but the holy

men of God spoke, inspired by the Holy Ghost."[1] The scripture is God's word, and therefore divine; man's mind is human and fallible, and therefore cannot always read the secrets of God, nor fathom the depths of the divine thoughts. St Irenaeus puts the matters briefly and yet clearly—the passage might be a commentary on the words of Isaias, which we have quoted above: "The scriptures are perfect, having been spoken by God's word; but we, being creatures of a day, and inferior to the word and His spirit, are therefore without knowledge of His mysteries."[2] It is of men that Job says: "They shall grope as in the dark, and not in the light;" but of God alone he adds: "He discovereth deep things out of darkness, and bringeth up to light the shadow of death."[3] "O Lord, how great are Thy works! Thy thoughts are exceeding deep."[4] Scripture is the record of these works which are "great." and the expression of the thoughts "exceeding deep." Scripture therefore is sublime, and may be above the comprehension of men.

[1] 2 Pet. i, 20, 21. [2] Iren. *Contra Hæres.* Lib. II, 28, 2.
[3] Job xii, 25, 22. [4] Ps. xci, 6.

CHAPTER VII

TRADITION

1. "THE bible, the whole bible, and nothing but the bible." This is the Protestant creed. But they have another canon of belief besides the bible, there is another article in their creed which counteracts this profession of their faith, and that is private judgement. The Catholic repeats that word, "the bible, the whole bible," but he does not add, "nothing but the bible." He recognizes another authority, a double authority. There is tradition, and, in all and above all, there is the ever-living authority of the divinely constituted Church. Every religion claims infallibility. The Protestant claims it for his private judgement; the Catholic claims it for his Church. Scripture is not the only channel of God's message to man; He hands down His words and His will through tradition. "Ask thy father, and he will declare to thee, thy elders, and they will tell thee,"[1] is the Old Testament version of tradition.[2] "Brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions, which you have learned *whether by My word* or by our epistle,"[3] is the perpetuation of the doctrine in the New Testament.

By tradition, in the ecclesiastical sense of the word, we understand a truth coming from God, in the first instance as "the Way, the Truth, and the Life," and then being handed down from father to son, from generation to generation, from age to age, not as a written but an unwritten word, or if it be transmitted by writing, not necessarily by inspired scripture. St Paul approves of this mode in the transmission of truth when he writes to his disciple, St Timothy: "The things which thou hast *heard* of me, by many witnesses, the same commend to faithful

[1] Deut. xxxii, 7. [3] 2 Thess. ii, 14.

[2] For the actual teaching of the Jews on Tradition the reader is referred to *The Jewish Religion* by M. Friedländer. The sources from which we derive our knowledge of this *histarott*, i.e., (things hidden) Revelation and Tradition.

men, who shall be fit to *teach* others also."[1] The apostle does not say "the things thou hast *read*," but the things thou hast *heard*"; he does not add: "*Write* them"—that would be scripture—but "*teach* them"—that is tradition. The truth that passes from lip to lip, and so is handed down from century to century, is tradition. There are many such truths in the Christian creed. How do we know, except by tradition, that the law of keeping holy the seventh day—that is Saturday—has been abrogated, and that the obligation of resting and praying has been authoritatively transferred to the first day of the week—that is Sunday? And yet the whole Christian Church—eastern as well as western—keeps the first day holy instead of the seventh, although there is no authority in inspired scripture for it, nay, although the letter of scripture still prescribes the seventh. Infant baptism again rests on tradition, and not on an explicit written law. On what authority, except that of tradition, too, do we ascribe the Gospels to the four apostles, whom we call evangelists, because we believe them to have been their inspired authors? Their names do not appear, as does the name of the author of a book, either at the beginning or the end of the *Codices*; and in the case of three out of four of the gospels there is, not only no extrinsic, there is not even any intrinsic evidence in the writing, to identify them as the work of the apostles to whom the whole Christian world, nevertheless, ascribes them. Every nation has its traditions, as well as its written code. Every society of any standing has unwritten as well as written laws. "We have always done that," the members say; "this has been our invariable custom"; and the "invariable custom" has the force of law. Every family is proud, not only of its genealogy and its history, but of its "traditions." "It is a tradition in our family," we say; and we value and respect the tradition. So is it in the great Catholic nation, which embraces all nations, in the vast society which is limited

[1] 2 Tim. ii, 2.

neither by rivers, nor mountains, nor seas; so in the Christian family. St Paul's practice has ever been continued: "I *delivered* unto you that which I also received."[1] That oral receiving and delivering of truth has been a law in the Church; father delivering, son receiving; son delivering to his son what he himself had received; parent age giving to its offspring age that which it, in due time become a parent, will pass on to the age that is to rise from its embers. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing from the word of God."[2] Our Lord did not say: "He that readeth the gospel heareth Me;" but "He that heareth you heareth Me," the divine voice using the human voice as the channel of communication with successive ages of men. St Basil reminds us that of dogmas some come to us through the scripture, and "some we have received transmitted to us from the traditions of the apostles, both these having the same force."[3] St Thomas Aquinas teaches that "Custom has the force of law."[4]

2. Tradition, or unwritten law and custom, has ever been recognized as a power—a ruling power—in the Christian Church. In our Lord's own lifetime they could not have taken for their rule of faith "The bible, the whole bible, and nothing but the bible," for the bible was not written. Jesus Christ Himself never wrote a word of the bible, nor did He commission His apostles in His lifetime to do so; or if He did we have no evidence of this in the Gospel. His commission to His apostles was to "Go and *teach*," to "*preach* the Gospel," not to "*write* it." The test of obedience was not "he who reads the bible," but "he who *hears* you hears Me, and he who hears Me hears Him that sent Me."[5] And the apostles "going forth preached everywhere."[6] They had no bibles to give, no scriptures to offer, no tracts to distribute; they had only the living word and the life-giving tradition. The Church in its earliest

[1] 1 Cor. xv, 3. [2] Rom. x, 17. [3] *De Spiritu Sancto*, cxxvii, n. 66.
[4] *Summa* 1ª 2dae, xcvii, 3. [5] Luke x, 16. [6] Mark xvi, 20.

stage, in its infancy, in its cradle, lived on tradition, as the babe lives on its mother's milk. The early Christians could not say "the bible, the whole bible," for the whole bible did not exist. The Gospels were not written till the Church had been founded some years; and when written, they were not immediately disseminated. The first age was not an age of electric telegraphs and telephones and daily papers; they had not even printing to spread the written world. The one *codex*, or manuscript, had to serve for many people. Indeed the majority by far could not read. The Epistles were not encyclicals to the world: they were only individual letters sent to the ministers of a particular town—Corinth, Rome, Ephesus and the rest—and a long time must necessarily have elapsed before the Epistles could have passed the city gates and have been read in another town. They had, however, other ways of teaching. "It is clear that they (the apostles)," says St Chrysostom, "did not deliver all things by their Epistles, but communicated many things without writing; and these likewise deserve our faith and assent. It is a tradition: make no further inquiry."[1] Nor was it necessary that they should write everything. St Irenaeus, who lived in the century after the apostolic age, writes: "Supposing that the apostles had left us nothing in writing, should we not still follow the rule of doctrine which they delivered to those to whom they entrusted the churches? This rule many barbarous nations follow, who, being without ink and parchment, have the words of salvation written by the Spirit in their hearts, and guard diligently the tradition which has been delivered."[2] We cannot for a moment imagine that all who had not "the bible and the whole bible," were out of the pale of salvation. Mary had it not, "Mary of whom was born Jesus." Joseph had it not, Joseph, "a just (i.e., a holy) man." John the Baptist probably could not read,

[1] *Hom. in 2 Ep. Thess.*, Cap. ii, Hom. iv, n. 2.
[2] *Advers. Hæres.* liii, c. 4.

and yet "greater was not born of woman" than he. The first verse of the first chapter of the Gospel had not been written when Jesus said to Dismas, "This day thou shalt be with Me in paradise." Yet Dismas was amongst the saved. In the early ages Tertullian, St Irenaeus and several others, maintained that tradition was a rule of faith, a necessary rule of faith, and the only one which for most believers was a practical, practicable, or possible rule of faith. Even as the Church "grew and waxed strong," by far the majority of Christians had to abide by, "hold fast by," tradition. For 1400 years there was no printing. The scriptures had to be written, word by word and letter by letter, and even those who could read—and they were as "rare as black swans"—could not procure the precious codex, or manuscript, which contained the written word of God. They had to be content to listen to the living voice, and to be ruled by apostolic traditions. When printing was invented—to-day even, when the press vomits out its books daily by thousands, and yearly by millions—there are many who cannot read, more who do not read, and some who have no written word to read. Yet who shall say that these multitudes are to be "cast out into the exterior darkness where shall be weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth"?

The Catholic Church, then, holds, and holds with authority, and holds with reason, and holds on the strength of the bible itself, that God speaks to man not by the bible alone, but by the Church's living voice, and by the undying voice of tradition. Hence the Catholic's logical profession of faith: "I most steadfastly admit and embrace the apostolic and ecclesiastical traditions, and all other observances and constitutions of the same Church."[1] Hence, too, the Church's inexorable law: "If any one shall wilfully and knowingly despise such traditions, let him be anathema."[2]

[1] *Creed of Pope Pius IV.* [2] Council of Trent, sess. IV.

CHAPTER VIII

AUTHORITY

1. THE apostolate of our Lord was to be perpetual. "Jesus Christ yesterday, to-day, and the same for ever."[1] That perpetual apostolate is twofold, the apostolate of His work and the apostolate of His teaching, for "He began to do and to teach."[2] His work and His doctrine are to be undying, they are to be perpetuated to all time. And how? What is to carry on, who is to perpetuate this double apostolate? The sacred scriptures are one means, and tradition another, by which His words and His work pass from generation to generation, from age to age, till "the end of all things." But something else, something more, is needed, needed to perpetuate even the scriptures and tradition. The need is a living and reliable authority. Some man, or some corporate body, must be authorized to perpetuate the divine work, and to continue the divine teaching; to be the mouth-piece of God to man; to be the guardian of His promises; to further His interests; to accomplish His designs, which are as far-seeing and far-reaching as are the ages of the world and the history of men. That authority we claim for the Catholic Church. She is to us, her loyal and faithful children, the vice-gerent of God in the world. Without authority there could be no oneness, either of work or of teaching. The doctrine of private judgement is theoretically subversive of unity, and, as we see outside the Catholic Church, practically and effectively destructive of a united apostolate, whether of work or word. Only authority, as claimed and exercised by the Church Catholic, can preserve unity of

[1] Heb. xiii, 8. [2] Acts i, 1.

government and oneness of teaching. Private judgement is the proud boast of Protestantism. Protestantism is the offspring of private judgement, and it is naturally proud of its parent. The Protestant system, in its infancy, was fed upon the milk of private judgement, and now the stronger food of its riper years is still private judgement. It lives upon it, and thrives upon it, and becomes more Protestant every day. The "crisis in the church" is evidence of its vivifying influence; the multitude of its sects and divisions reveal its inner workings; it is the leaven in the mass; more, it is the very life of Protestantism; with it "it lives and moves and has its being." "High church," as much as "Low church," is the outcome of Protestantism or private judgement.

A witty Frenchman once said: "They have a great many religions in England, although they have only one sauce. They worship everything. They would worship the sun if they ever saw it." He was right, there are a great many religions in England. Nearly every bell that rings from our countless steeples calls to a different creed. But he was wrong in concluding that English people worship everything; the contrary is the truth. They worship only one thing, i.e., their own private judgement; but private judgement leads to many forms of belief. Private judgement is each man's infallible guide, infallible not in itself, nor to others, but infallible to himself—his pope, his church, his general council, all rolled into one. The first record we have of private judgement comes to us from heaven, when Lucifer said, "I will not serve"; the second from Eden, when Adam and his wife would be as "gods, knowing good and evil." In both those instances it was the enemy of true religion, as it is to-day. Unity, whether of church, of government, of doctrine, or of creed, is absolutely incompatible with individual opinion. Authority is the only safeguard of unity. Private judgement or individual judgement, is the secret of all the sects, and the

divisions, and diversity of religions that rend the robe of the Anglican Church to-day. "*Tot sententiæ quot capita.*" One minister believes in a real presence in the species, another admits two presences, another denies that there is any presence at all except the presence of bread.[1] One minister of the Established Church teaches that confession ought to be practised; another that it may be, but need not be; a third that it is nowise lawful.[2] In one Established church the doctrine of prayer for the dead and prayer to the saints is preached; they celebrate "requiems"; they have a "Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament"; they have "Stations of the Cross"; they use incense, and wear vestments. In a church in the next street, belonging to the same Established religion, they call these practices "popish rags," and "relics of the papacy." The bishops look on calmly, and, like the spurious mother in Solomon's wise decision, allow their child to be divided. They say to those who differ in points of creed the most vital, and doctrines the most essential, as Abram said to Lot: "Let there be no quarrel between me and thee, between thy herdsmen and mine . . . . Depart from me I pray thee . . . . If thou wilt go to the left hand, I will go to the right; if thou choose the right, I will pass over to the left."[3] They cannot say, with the Apostle, "We being many are one body."[4] And the secret of it all? Because, in the words of an eminent member of the Anglican Church, spoken at one of those Church Congresses which are Anglican councils of disunion, because "Protestantism (i.e. private judgement) is the backbone of the Church of England." That is why he was forced to add: "Just now our parishes are often like islands in some parts of the Pacific ocean, almost within sight of each other, and yet inhabited by distinct tribes, variously coloured and dressed, and ruled by ever-quarrel-

[1] See "*The Charge*" of the Archbishop of Canterbury, 1898.
[2] Ibid. [3] Gen. xiii, 8, 9. [4] Rom. xii, 5.

ling chiefs, and with a deep sea rolling between."[1] This is the war of private judgement, the battle of individual opinion. The result of the battle is disunion.

Private judgement is an element of discord, a disintegrating principle, the secret and the source of dissension and disunion. Protestantism is only the concrete of private judgement. Private judgement is Protestantism in the abstract. The one and the other must be destructive of unity. Individual opinion must be as fallible and manifold as are the individuals forming or formulating the opinions; and wherever it prevails, there must result diversity and multiplicity. If in an army each soldier followed his own judgement and there was no authority to whom all submitted, could a war be successfully carried on? or would the lives and property of a nation be safe in the defenders' keeping? If in a vessel each sailor were to act on his judgement in the time of a storm, and all were to agree to rebel against the authority of their captain or their chief, would not the ship be in danger of running ashore, striking on a rock, or colliding with another vessel and foundering? If in a place of business there were no responsible authority, but all the employed acted, each one as he pleased, we could hardly anticipate a favourable balance-sheet at the end of the financial year. A kingdom without laws or rulers or courts of law or king would be "a kingdom divided against itself," and could not long "stand." Apply all this to a Church—*Mutato nomine de te fabula narratur*—the result will be the same. The Protestant divine whom we have just quoted said, on the same occasion, and we who look on from the outside can see that his words were true: "We are equally agreed that there is a sad want of unity in the Church of England." There is, and there must be. In this kingdom there is no king and no laws whom all obey, and so it is "divided." In this vessel each one is his own captain, and so the ship strikes on rocks or

[1] *Liverpool Congress, October 9, 1879.*

collides. In this army there is no commanding officer, no authority to whom all defer and whose will all reverentially obey, and so you have mutiny in the ranks and divisions in the camp. In this church, if each teaches what he likes, wears vestments or not, as he chooses, imitates "Rome" or cries "Rome" down, according to his fancy, there cannot be consistency and unity; there must be sects and divisions.

When from "the city of confusion," the Babel of confused tongues, we come to the Catholic Church, we find it "a city of peace." Why? Private judgement abdicates, and authority rules in its stead. Individual opinion sits at the feet of the Gamaliel of an acknowledged power. We have unity of teaching, of creed, of worship, of government; for the very reason that our first principle is admission of an authority, and our second principle submission to the authority which we admit. Everywhere we find the same Catholic Church, teaching the same Catholic doctrines, believing the same Catholic creeds, following the same Catholic ritual, using the same Catholic Latin tongue, submitting to the same Catholic pope; because everywhere the same authority prevails, and private judgement recedes before it as the dim, cloudy shades before the rising or the risen sun. We admit such an authority for two reasons: we feel the need of it; and we believe that Jesus Christ has appointed that authority to satisfy the need. If there be no authority, how can there be one creed or "one faith"? How can there be one Church or, as St Paul expresses it, "one baptism"?

We have said that an authority is needed to interpret and give life to the dead letter of scripture. Before we come to interpretation we must have an authority to certify to the inspired character of scripture, that it is divine scripture at all. St Augustine's word is well worn from having been so often quoted, but we must repeat it once more: "I would not believe the Gospel unless I were

moved to it by the authority of the Catholic Church."[1] We see the logic of this when we remember that, were it not for the authority of the Church, we should not know what is and what is not the gospel. "The excellent authority of the canonical and sacred books of the Old and New Testament," the same learned doctor says, "is continued from the time of the apostles through the succession of bishops and churches, which authority is a superior authority, to which every pious and faithful intellect must submit."[2] We depend upon the Church to discriminate between the inspired writings of the Spirit of God and the spurious writings of the spirit of man. There were many books written in the early ages, even in apostolic times, some before the apostolic days, which, though they may be genuine, are not admitted by any Christian Church to be inspired. Such are "The Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs," the "Gospel according to St Peter," "The Epistle of Jesus Christ to Abgar," "The Acts of St Andrew" and several others. Who has decided that they are not inspired? The Church. If she had not so decided by her authority, we should have been in darkness or doubt. On the other hand, upon what testimony do all professing Christians admit the four Gospels of SS. Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, and the different Epistles of St Paul, St Peter, St James and St John, together with the other Books of the Old and New Testaments, to be God's message to man? On the authority of the Church. So that even they who deny her authority, and quote various texts of the bible to support their false position, are dependent upon her for the bible from which they quote; and they believe that it is the bible, i.e., God's word, because she has declared it so to be.

The sense of scripture, from the fact of its being the word of God, whose thoughts are above our thoughts "as

[1] *Contra Epist. Manichaei Fund.*, i, n. 5.
[2] *Contra Faust.* lib. XI, n. v.

the heavens are exalted above the earth," is oftentimes not clear to the dim light of our feeble minds. Different men find in the same passage or the same verse meanings and doctrines opposed diametrically the one to the other. Who is to decide which is the right interpretation, if either be right, and which is wrong? We must have an authority living and speaking and reliable, because appointed by God.

Men are divided about the sacraments: whether there are any; and if so, how many? Some say there are two, some three, some seven. If we are not to go through life in ignorance and doubt, some authority must decide with certainty whether there are any; and if so, how many; and when, and where, and by whom they are to be given. The eternity of hell is called in question. It is a vital point, an essential doctrine. We must have a definite judgement, an authoritative decision on this point. Useless to appeal to the bible alone. The devil quotes the bible; heretics quote the bible; evil men, in defence of their evil lives, affect to show from scripture a justification of their wicked ways. We must have some one who can tell us; some one who "has the spirit of God." Here comes the need of authority to solve knotty questions, to clear disputed points.

Further, this authority must be infallible, else where does the *authority* come in? How can we depend upon it? How feel confidence in its judgements? We cannot think that God will allow us to lean upon a reed which will break in our hand; that He will abandon us to be "tossed about by every wind of doctrine" without a rock to which we can cling; that He who is "the Way and Truth and Life" will let us wander, and stray, and err, and die, for want of a reliable, that is an infallible, guide. No. The very commission which He gave to His Church to "go and teach," to go and "preach the Gospel" and to "go into the highways and byways," implies infallibility. He has not only said it implicitly in appointing guides who were not "blind," and teachers who were not "dumb"; He has said

it explicitly; he has frequently and solemnly repeated the explicit declaration, "As My Father hath sent Me, I send you."[1] His Father sent Him as an infallible guide. "He that heareth you heareth *Me*,"[2] i.e., heareth an unerring teacher. "Lo, I am with you all days;"[3] how then can they go astray? "Thou art Peter. Upon this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against her";[4] but they would prevail if she fell into error. "If he will not hear the Church, let him be to thee as the heathen and the publican."[5] Why should he be excommunicate for not listening to the Church, if the Church were liable to err, and to lead him into error, if she were a blind guide leading the blind, "and leader and led could fall into the pit"? "You shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem . . . . and even to the uttermost parts of the earth";[6] surely not witnesses to a lie, but to the eternal truth? "He that despiseth you despiseth Me";[7] but we could not help despising one who had led us astray from God's truth. All these words, and many more which could be quoted, imply infallibility. Yet they were spoken to the Christian Church —the Church, that is, of Christ's founding—by Christ the infallible Founder.

The Catholic Church has ever claimed this gift of infallible authority, from the day upon which she received it from her divine Founder to this hour. In her first council, held at Jerusalem, she spoke with the authority of the divine Spirit: "It hath seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us."[8] In her after councils her language has been the same: "If any one deny this our declaration, let him be anathema." In her decisions on essential points of doctrine she has never hesitated or faltered in her dogmatic tone. She claims this authority to-day; she will, she must claim it "unto all days," for He has said whose "word is

[1] John xx, 21. [2] Luke x, 16. [3] John xiv, 16.
[4] Matt. xvi, 18. [5] Matt. xviii, 17. [6] Acts i, 8.
[7] Luke x, 16. [8] Acts xv, 28.

truth," and whose word can never fail: "Lo, I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world." So long as He is with her, her authority cannot fail.

Catholic people admit, and have ever admitted the claim. The Church is to the Catholic the "pillar of fire by night" and "the pillar of a cloud by day"; following her he cannot wander from the right way. Her authority is the compass which guides the vessel through storm, and wind, and wave; with their eye on the compass they must sail in the track that leads to the haven of rest. She is to the Catholic, as she was to St Paul, "the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of truth."[1] "I believe in the Catholic Church" has a meaning in the Catholic creed which none but a Catholic can understand. He believes *in* the Church as he believes in his own mother, as he believes in his own God. Not merely does he believe in her existence, but he believes *in* her—in her unfailing light, her unerring truth and truthfulness; he believes in her as his infallible and authoritative guide. Hence is he ever at rest upon her bosom, hence is he ever at peace in her as in his true home.

[1] 1 Tim. iii, 15.

CHAPTER IX

THE CHURCH

"I BELIEVE in the Catholic Church" is one of the most vitally important articles of the twelve which constitute the Catholic Creed. More books and treatises have been written upon it, more lectures have been given and more sermons preached about it; it has been the subject of more discussions, public and private, than any of the other eleven. It is the essential, the indispensable, the crucial article of the Creed. Once admit what the Catholic professes in the short formulary of six words, "I believe in the Catholic Church": first, that she is of divine institution, "the Church of the living God"; secondly, that she is the infallible witness of God to men, "the pillar and ground of truth"; thirdly, that if we earnestly look for her in the world we can find her amidst, and distinguish her from, spurious churches; and that when we find her, we find true life: "He that shall find me shall find life and draw salvation from the Lord"; fourthly, that she has especially four marks or signs or characters peculiar to herself by which we can recognize her as the Church of God's founding; fifthly, that these marks are her unity, her sanctity, her catholicity and her apostolicity, i.e, that she is the one, holy, Catholic, apostolic Church"; sixthly, that all are bound to belong to her when once they are satisfied as to the justice of her claims; lastly, that she cannot, because she is guided by God, either lead her children into wrong paths or teach them anything but truth—once admit all this, as we Catholics do, and all controversy and all difficulties and all doubts are at an end. Does she speak upon matters of faith or morality? We listen and learn. Does she command? We do not argue, we obey. Does she "reprove, entreat, rebuke with all

patience and doctrine"?[1] We do not chafe under the correction, we submit to the parental rod. Does she warn us against those "teachers having itching ears" who "will not bear sound doctrine," but "will turn away their hearers from the truth, and will be turned to fables"?[2] We listen with docility to her warning voice, and humbly follow her guidance.

The Church is our mother, we call her "our holy mother the Church;" and we are her children, "children of the Church" we call ourselves—simple, humble, loyal, obedient and true. We believe in her; we have confidence in her, for we "know whom we have trusted"; we love her as our mother. The Catholic believes in his Church as the confiding child believes in its mother. The child does not simply believe that its mother has two eyes, two hands, a body, a mind, a heart, a soul; it believes *in* its mother, in her word, her truthfulness, her fidelity, her power, her love. So does the Catholic believe in his Church. Abraham believed in God, and because God commanded, "he hoped against hope" and would have slain his son. Noe believed in God, and "framed the ark for the saving of his family, by which he condemned the world."[3] Moses believed in Him, and left Egypt at His bidding, and "passed through the Red Sea as by dry land."[4] Such is the faith of the Catholic in "the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of truth."

And what is this "Church" of which the Catholic says in such unhesitating confidence: "I believe in the Catholic Church"? The literal meaning of "Church" is *convocation* or *congregation;* that is, a calling and bringing together. The catechism definition is: "The union of all the faithful under one head," the one head being, according to the Catholic teaching, Jesus Christ our Lord, represented visibly on earth by His vicegerent or vicar, the pope, who succeeds to the see, and consequently to the office, rights,

[1] 2 Tim. iv, 2. [2] Ibid. 4, 5. [3] Heb. xi, 7. [4] Ibid. 29.

privileges and powers of St Peter, who, as we shall see in a later chapter, was appointed immediately by our Lord to be His representative as the visible head of His Church. The word *Church* is not of frequent recurrence in scripture. It is used sometimes in a restricted sense in the Old Testament, but not often: "They shall tell of his alms in the churches [or assemblies] of the saints";[1] "I will praise Thee in the midst of the Church;"[2] "They shall exalt Him in the Church of the people."[3] In the Gospel our Lord Himself makes use of the word twice: once when He appoints Peter its head, or rather points him out as the rock upon which He is to build it: "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church;"[4] and again when He insists, under pain of excommunication, upon the obedience of the faithful to the Church: "If he will not hear thee, tell the Church; if he will not hear the Church, let him be to thee as the heathen and the publican."[5] In the Epistles of St Paul, the Acts of the Apostles and the Apocalypse "the Church" is spoken of, but comparatively infrequently. The idea, however, which is embodied in the word Church is of frequent occurrence in the divine scriptures. The "one fold" of "the one Shepherd," the "little kingdom" which "it hath pleased your Father to give you," "the kingdom of God," "the kingdom of heaven," "the city of God"—all these titles and many more are applied to the Church, and, directly or indirectly, reveal some of the characteristics and prerogatives with which her divine Founder endowed her.

Divine Institution of the Church

THE Church's divine Founder is Jesus Christ, "who hath loved us and washed us from our sins in His Own Blood, and hath made us a kingdom and priests to God and His Father,"[6]

[1] Ecclus xxxi, 11. [2] Ps. xxxi, 23. [3] Ps. cvi, 32.
[4] Matt. xvi, 18. [5] Ibid. xviii, 17. [6] Apoc. i, 5, 6.

"who is the Head of the Church,"[1] who "loves the Church,"[2] and who, to prove His love, "delivered Himself up for it, that He might sanctify it. . . . that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish,"[3] who even now "nourisheth and cherisheth the Church,"[4] preserving to it its life, its beauty, its power and its strength.

The prophets who foresaw and foretold the coming of the Messiah, foresaw and foretold that He would found a Church which was to perpetuate His teaching, His worship, and His name. "Thy God shall reign,"[5] Isaias had said; "A King shall reign," Jeremias added, defining that He was to have a kingdom, "and He shall be wise, and shall execute justice and judgement on the earth . . . . and this is the name they shall call Him, 'the Lord our Just One.'"[6] Daniel was still more explicit: "In the days of these kingdoms the God of heaven shall set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed; and His kingdom shall not be delivered up to another people; and it shall break to pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and itself shall stand for ever."[7] The angel of the Annunciation, in foretelling to Mary our Lord's immediate coming, foretold also His future mission and the perpetuating of His work: "The Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of David his father, and He shall reign in the house of Jacob for ever, and of His kingdom there shall be no end."[8] In fulfilment of the prophetic promises, our Lord, when He "began to do and to teach," provided for the perpetuating of His work and His teaching, by founding the Church which was to be the depositary of His power and the exponent of His truth to the end of time. So clear was the divine institution of the Church to St Paul, that he points to it in his Epistles as an argument to his disciples to live a better and a higher

[1] Eph. v, 23. [2] Ibid. 25. [3] Ibid. 25, 27. [4] Ibid. 29.
[5] Isa. lii, 7. [6] Jer. xxiii, 5, 6. [7] Dan. ii, 44. [8] Luke i, 32, 33.

life. "You are God's building,"[1] "other foundations no man can lay, but that which is laid, which is Christ Jesus,"[2] "He hath made Him Head over all the Church which is His Body,"[3] "in Him who is the Head, even Christ,"[4] "You are the Body of Christ."[5]

In founding His Church the divine Architect began by calling together those who were to work under Him and who were to carry on the work when He should be taken from them: "Having called the twelve together He gave them power."[6] Then He called others, who were to form not the ministry but the laity in His Church, and were to be the nucleus of the lay element, which is an integral part of His Church. "Going up into a mountain, He called unto Him whom He would: and they came to Him." They were to be members of His Church, but they were not to have the work of the ministry, for a distinction is made between them and the apostles in the very next sentence of the Gospel: "And He made that twelve should be with Him, and that He might send them to preach."[7] Here we have priests and people, pastors and flock, clergy and laity, teachers and disciples. Thus was formed the body of His Church. It was as yet like the lifeless clay in Eden, He had to breathe a "spirit" into it that it might live. Still it was the nucleus, the beginning of the divine Church. He alluded to it as such, designating it His "kingdom." When He sent the seventy-two, giving them power to heal the sick, He encouraged them with this thought: "The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you";[8] and to the scribe who had "answered wisely" He said: "Thou art not far from the kingdom of God."[9]

Having called His apostles together, that they might be "with Him" and might be instructed by Him in the Gospel of the kingdom, He sent them to preach, to gather the scattered sheep into the fold, to catch the fishes in the

[1] 1 Cor. iii, 9. [2] Ibid. 11. [3] Eph. i, 22.
[4] Ibid. iv, 15. [5] 1 Cor. xii, 27. [6] Matt. x, 1.
[7] Mark iii, 13, 14. [8] Luke x, 11. [9] Mark xii, 34.

net, to make others members of the kingdom: "Going, preach, saying: The kingdom of heaven is at hand"; prove the truth of your words by miracles: "heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out devils; freely have you received, freely give."[1] On a still more solemn occasion, when He had risen from the dead, and "the Spirit had come upon them," when at Pentecost the soul had come unto the body of the Church, He gave them the great commission to carry on His work, and to carry it on to the end. The words are the concluding words of St Matthew's Gospel, the summing up of our Lord's work amongst men: "And the eleven disciples went into Galilee, into the mountain which Jesus had appointed them. And seeing Him they adored; but some doubted." They did not, however, doubt of His promise long, as we see from the context. "And Jesus coming spoke to them, saying: All power is given to Me in heaven and on earth." That is His authority for speaking as He is going to speak. "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations" (i.e., make the Church Catholic), "baptizing them" (i.e., making them members of the Church) "in the name" (not of Paul or Cephas, for it is not a *human* church, but) "of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost" (for it is a divine Church). "Teaching men to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you" (i.e., perpetuate My words and My work); "and behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world."[2] The Church is to be Catholic, not only in place, "all nations," but in time, "all days." It is divine, the Church of "Father, Son and Holy Ghost." It is to be guided to the end of time by Jesus Christ, the invisible Head, "I am with you all days." This is the Gospel history of the foundation or establishment of the Church of God on earth.

To it—the body—He promised the Spirit, which was to be its soul, and which was to give it divine life for ever. "I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Paraclete, that He may abide with you for ever . . . . the

[1] Matt. x, 8. [2] Matt. xxviii, 16-20.

Spirit of Truth . . . . He shall abide with you and shall be in you."[1] Then, on the great Pentecostal day, the Holy Ghost came into the Church "to abide for ever" as the soul, the life, the life-giving principle of the Church. The Holy Ghost came to stay. There is no ascension of the Holy Ghost, only a coming down, a descent. At another time He breathed upon them, and said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost."[2] Even as when God breathed into the lifeless body in Paradise it lived, so, when He breathed upon the Church, the Spirit of His breathing vivified, energized, and gave life and light to the Church. The Holy Ghost is eternal, so is the Church. She is first militant on earth, and then triumphant in heaven.

Having received the soul, the Church grew: for growth is the first effort of life. He had foretold its growth, its persecution, and its ultimate triumph. "Unless the grain of seed die, it alone remaineth; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit."[3] It died, and then came the increase. "The grain of mustard seed became a tree, and the birds of the air took refuge in its branches." The little leaven changed the mass. The Son of Man was lifted up, and drew all hearts to Himself. Men sold all they had, and bought the field which held the hidden treasure. They sacrificed everything for the priceless pearl of faith. Parthians and Medes and Elamites and inhabitants of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphilia Egypt, and the parts of Lybia about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and Proselytes, Cretes and Arabians "received the word," and were baptized. The apostles preached, "their words went to the ends of the earth," and "God added daily to their society—that is to the Church—such as should be saved."[4] That is the record of early apostolic days. In later years the Church increased and multiplied. Apostles and disciples suffered and died for the faith, and the martyrs' blood

[1] John xiv, 16, 17. [2] John xx, 22. [3] John xii, 24. [4] Acts ii, 47.

was the seed of the Church. Like the Egyptian slaves, the more they were oppressed, the more they were multiplied. Enemies tried to destroy the Church : they might just as well have tried to destroy the sun. They tried to stifle her voice : they might as well have essayed to extinguish the sun's light. God intended his Church to have an undying life, to "abide for ever," to live "until the consummation of the world," to perpetuate His word and His work. Consequently no man's hand can destroy the Church, no human power can stunt her growth, no earthly, or even heavenly, influence can prevent or retard the fulfilment of His divine will. The Church was born to live, and not to die: and live the Church must to the end of time. There is and must be, in the Church a perpetual life. This we call the *indefectibility* of the Church. This is the Church, which was born on the shores of Galilee, and was strengthened with divine life in the upper chamber of Jerusalem. The Catholic Church of to-day—old but yet young, aged but not infirm—can trace her origin, even as noble families trace their pedigree and kings their genealogy, through an unbroken line of Roman pontiffs, an uninterrupted hierarchy of faithful ministers and a continued apostolate of worship and doctrine, to Jesus Christ and to the apostolic Church. No link is missing from the chain: no rung is lost from the ladder; no year, or month, or day is wanting to make the cycle of centuries of continuous history perfect. The work was to be a work among men; therefore has the Church been a visible Church, visible in all ages, visible in all lands. She has always been, as she is to-day, "the mountain of the house of the Lord, prepared on the top of the mountains, and exalted above the hills," so that into it "all nations (may) flow;"[1] a visible, perpetual, living, divine Church. I believe in this *His* Catholic Church, living, preaching, teaching, and sanctifying men to-day.

[1] Isa. ii, 2.

CHAPTER X

INFALLIBILITY OF THE CHURCH

THE Church founded by Jesus Christ was to be a visible and perpetual Church, to carry on amongst men a visible apostolate of teaching and worship, which was necessary for the spiritual and moral needs of men, in all places and in all times. She was to be a divinely appointed teacher; consequently she was to have the divine gift of infallibility. God's messengers to His creatures must be faithful, reliable, true; else the messenger will be unworthy of God, and the message will be in vain. A divinely constituted teacher must be infallible, for God must be true to Himself. The denial of infallibility is a reflection upon Jesus Christ. It reflects upon His nature, for He is the essential truth and could not send an erring messenger with authority to speak for Himself. It reflects upon His promises, for He has assured to His Church His own divine presence, and the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit. It reflects upon His work, which, being His, must be divine.

If the Church is to be God's witness to men, men must be able to depend upon her, as they depend upon the rising and setting of the sun, and upon the revolution of the earth around the great orb. Truth can only be one; the true witness of truth cannot be divided and contradictory. God has given to us Christian men, "born of water and the Holy Ghost," a spiritual instinct which craves, hungers and thirsts for truth, which makes us cry out with an earnestness greater than that of the unregenerate Pilate: "What is truth? Where is truth?" With that instinct born to us, in germ at least, at the font of baptism, He must give an unerring guide to truth. We hunger, He gives us

food, feeding the very sparrows; we are cold, He gives us raiment, clothing even the lilies with robes glorious beyond the glory of Solomon; we have a desire to see, He gives us light; we thirst, He finds us wherewith to quench our thirst. So, in all our spiritual cravings, God in like manner provides for their satisfaction. Our thirst for truth can never be slaked unless we have certainty. Certainty implies infallibility. We are certain that two added to two make four, that the whole of any given substance is greater than a part of it, that two parallel lines remaining parallel can never meet—these are infallible axioms in natural science. We must have infallible axioms in supernatural or theological science. An infallible teacher must be the organ of these infallible supernatural truths. That teacher we call "the Church."

Even Plato said that "It was necessary that a master should come from heaven." He came; He went away; He left others in His stead. "As the Father hath sent Me so do I send you."[1] They were to do His work, to continue His mission, and they were to do the work and continue the mission in His way. His way was infallible, His mission was "to witness to the truth." Elias left his mantle and his double spirit to Eliseus; Christ left His mantle, and with it His double spirit, to the Church. He has ascended, but His double spirit remains with His mantle, in the Church. Jesus Christ is still the head, and the Holy Ghost is still the soul of the Church; therefore is she infallible. Infallibility rests upon the incarnation, "And the rock was Christ,"[2] and also upon the eternal mission of the Holy Ghost. He, the incarnate God, who said, "I am with you all days,"[3] said also, "The Spirit of Truth shall teach you all truth,"[4] and said in like manner as a corollary of the double mission, "He that heareth you heareth Me, and he that heareth Me heareth Him that

[1] John xx, 21. [2] 1 Cor. x, 4. [3] Matt. xxviii, 20. [4] Luke x, 16.

sent Me."[1] Jesus Christ could not live in the Church with the spirit of error, light with darkness, God with Belial. Therefore either His word has failed, "I am with you," or there can be no error in the Church. The Holy Ghost, the very "Spirit of Truth," could not tolerate falsehood in the Church, which is His temple. Therefore, either the promise has lapsed, and He does not "abide with us" for ever, or the Church is infallible, i.e., certain in her teaching of truth. God cast Satan out of heaven and Adam out of Eden, when they ceased to "stand in the truth," and He would not have the spirit of Satan "the liar from the beginning" in His earthly home.

"The Holy Ghost shall abide with you and shall be in you,"[2] our Lord promised. That promise is the pledge of infallibility. Either no error in the Church or no Holy Ghost. "I am with you," He said to His Church; then, error there cannot be in the Church. The Emperor Constantine realized this when he said, alluding to the Council of Nicæa, "What hath seemed good to the three hundred holy bishops must be looked upon as the teaching of the only-begotten Son of God." The fathers of the Council of Chalcedon bore witness to the same truth when they said: "We will neither allow ourselves nor others to overstep by a syllable what our fathers at Nicæa decreed. . . . for it was not they who spoke, but the Spirit of God Himself."[3] Successive councils made use of the same language, testifying to the same truth. "The Holy Ghost shall abide with you for ever"[4] is the divine version of that truth. If the Holy Ghost abide in her for ever, then for ever is the spirit of error to be exorcised from the Church. "The gates of hell shall not prevail against the Church";[5] then that which makes hell cannot find a home in the Church. "I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not, and thou being once converted confirm thy brethren."[6] That prayer of Jesus Christ is

[1] Ibid. [2] John xiv, 17. [3] Mansi, *Concilia,* Con. vi, 672.
[4] John xiv, 16. [5] Matt. xvi, 11. [6] Luke xxii, 32.

infallible in its efficacy. Therefore the faith of the head of the Church, as head of the Church, cannot fail, nor can he "confirm" in error or doubt.

How fatal would be the consequences of the denial of infallibility to the Church! We should have scales over our eyes, or if we saw at all we should only see "men as it were trees walking." We should ask, but wait in vain for a definite answer: "What is the bible?" "Whose work are the scriptures?" "Are they inspired or not?" "If they are inspired, how many of the books, and which of them, are so sealed with the divine Spirit?" "Is there a heaven, and is there a hell, and are they eternal?" "What are we to do to avoid the one? what to gain the other?" "What is truth, and where is it to be found?" "Amongst the thousand contradictory witnesses to Christ in the world which is the authorized one?" "What are we to believe?" "And if we do not believe, what then?" These questions *are* asked by millions and myriads to-day; asked, but asked in vain. And who are they who are in such terrible doubt? Those who reject infallibility. It must be so; it cannot be otherwise.

We see again the practical consequences of the rejection of an infallible teacher in the countless sects and divisions upon the subject of religion in the world, and even within the churches other than the Catholic Church; in the diversities of opinions in matters of the utmost importance, such as the necessity or non-necessity of baptism; the means by which sins are forgiven; the eternity of hell; the reality or non-reality of a divine presence in the sacrament of communion; the utility or futility of prayers to the saints and prayers for the dead; the existence or non-existence of any authority in the Church, and if authority exists, the subject in whom it resides. All these essential points, crucial doctrines, upon which heaven or hell depend, are left undecided, open questions; and the seekers for truth are as children tossed about by winds

and waves on an uncertain and boisterous sea. Without an undoubted and undoubting, i.e., an infallible, authority it must be so. What would the physical world be without the sun, or with a sun upon which we could not reckon for its rising or its setting, a sun which at any moment was liable to a sudden and total eclipse? What would a man's body be if he had within it a soul which he could not count upon, which sometimes ceased to act, and left him for hours or days or months deaf and dumb and blind and motionless?

That is what, in the spiritual world, a fallible church must be. Spiritually "no sun, no moon, no stars—total eclipse." Men cannot see, they have to grope in the dark, and fall into pits, or run against blind walls, or collide with each other. There is nothing to knit the members together, and there can be no unity. There is no centre around which all can revolve, and there can be no catholicity or universality. There exists no common bond of worship or doctrine or divine work, and you have division. Each is an unlinked link, and so there is no chain. Each is a rung but not united to others in one ladder. Each is a lifeless bone, disconnected from a living body.

Fallibility in a teacher cannot command respect in a disciple, and the teaching is unheard or unheeded. Faith and fallibility are incompatible. Unity without faith is a chimera; and "without faith it is impossible to please God."[1] No one can have faith in that which is fallible; he must believe in the infallibility of the teacher before he can have faith in the doctrine taught. He may have "views," "opinions," "ideas"—certitude never. A fallible church cannot be the Church of the faithful, but only of the doubting and doubtful. A fallible Church is a house "divided," and cannot stand. This accounts for the cry that is raised sometimes, but never in the Catholic Church, that "the Church is in danger." Fallible churches are

[1] Heb. xi, 6.

always in danger, as are houses built upon sand; any storm may destroy them, any political or social earthquake may cause them to topple down. The lack of infallibility, the absence of an infallible head, has been in the past, and will be in the future, the secret of the decay and ultimate failure of these institutions. Men get tired of resting on a reed which is always giving under them, especially when they are in the greatest need of support; they weary of standing upon shifting sands, and of having frequently to change their religious position. Ultimately they either fly to "the city of refuge," which is "built upon a rock," or else they drift into infidelity, and the fallible church fails. This has been the history of ages repeating itself. Churches, like nations, have risen and fallen. This has been the secret of their failure. It is said that Julian, the apostate, once asked a Christian soldier in derision: "Well, what is the carpenter's Son of Nazareth doing now?" And the soldier replied: "He is making your coffin." He and His Church have made many coffins, and have buried many fallible churches. They are still making coffins, and will bury more. He and His infallible Church will live, must live, to the end of time, and beyond. His Church cannot err, cannot fail, cannot wander, cannot decay, cannot die. "Lo, I am with you all days" is His legacy to the Church, and He, the Most High, is eternal. The Holy Ghost is her soul, and the Holy Ghost "abides with her for ever." "Thy sun shall go down no more, and thy moon shall not decrease, for the Lord shall be to thee for an everlasting light."[1] St Augustine asks, and the question answers itself: "If the body and the head, Christ and the Church, be one flesh, how have they not also one voice?" That one voice, being the voice of Christ, is infallible. The very existence of the Catholic Church through the ages is a proof of her divine life and consequently of her infallibility. So argues St

[1] Isa xl, 20.

John Chrysostom: "If the Spirit were to absent Himself, the Church would fall to pieces; but now that she exists, clearly the Spirit of God is in her."[1] We need not, therefore, ask: "Where is the true Church?" It is the infallible Church wherever that is; and only the Catholic Church *claims* infallibility. We need not listen to those who say: "Lo, here is Christ; lo, there." He is not in "the whirlwind," but in the gentle breeze. We need not ask: "What am I to believe?" we have only to ask: "What does the infallible Church teach?"—*that* we believe. Faith in a fallible teacher, were it possible to have such faith, would be a degradation to our intellect; faith in an infallible guide ennobles it. Following a fallible leader ends in confusion. It has been well said, "There are heretics everywhere, but not the same heretics everywhere. There is one sort in Africa, another sort in the east, a third sort in Egypt." But following an infallible guide leads to unity, and consequently "the faithful are all born of one mother, the Catholic Church; but though they are everywhere dispersed they are everywhere the same." Infallibility is the bond of union, as it is the soul of faith. "Where the Church is there is the spirit of God, and where the spirit of God is there is the Church and all grace; but the Spirit is the truth."[2] When the Catholic says, "I believe in the holy Catholic Church," he proclaims his faith in a Church which is infallible.

[1] *Hom. de S. Pentecost.* n. 4.

[2] *S. Irenæus adv. Hæres.* III, cap. xxiv.

CHAPTER XI

WHERE IS THE TRUE CHURCH?

We ended our last chapter with the words of St Irenaeus: "Where the Church is there is the Spirit of God, and and where the Spirit of God is there is the Church." This opens out to us a serious question: How are we to find out where the Church is, that we may be with "the Spirit of God"? for when we have the Spirit, then are we in the true Church. The prophet foretold that "the mountain of the house of God shall be set upon the top of the mountains and high above the hills."[1] The divine founder tells us that it is "a city placed on a mountain."[2] Again, we are assured that the way to it is so plain that even the fool cannot err therein.[3]

The Church is a visible Church; we ought to be able to find her. There are finger-posts on the way to direct us. When we come near to her, there are signs, "marks" we call them, characters or characteristics, by which she may be distinguished from churches so called which are not the one "Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of truth," but Will o' the wisp lights, leading men astray into pitfalls and dangerous ways. The true Christian Church, as the word implies, must be the continuation of the Church of Christ; the Church of His time living in our time. She must have the characters and prerogatives which were hers in the days when He "walked the earth, and was seen by men." If He was God, and every Christian must hold that as the fundamental truth of Christianity, the work which He began, and which He declared was to be perpetuated through all time, must exist now, and exist as He left it, without any essential or substantial change. It may have

[1] Mich. iv, 1. [2] Matt. v, 14. [3] Isa. xxxv, 8.

accidental modifications suited to different ages; its doctrines may have been more clearly and explicitly propounded, or as we say defined; it may have received new development; but, it must be existing actually, and it must be actually the same. It is said that a Jewish rabbi, a clergyman of the Anglican Church and a Catholic priest had a friendly discussion as to which of them professed and preached the true creed, since all three, or any two of them, could not possibly, even by the wildest flight of Eastern or Western imagination, be conceived to be right, seeing that they were in contradiction and active conflict, one with the other. The rabbi summed up the argument thus: "If the Messiah has not come I am right; if the Messiah has come the priest is right; but whether the Messiah has come or not, the Anglican cannot be right." St Augustine's word to the Donatists was not unlike the Jewish rabbi's. He said to them: "If your communion is the Church of Christ, then ours is not; for whichever it is, it is but one." St Augustine's view is the Catholic view. We believe that the Messiah has come, that Jesus Christ was the Messiah and that He was God: believing this we agree with the Jewish rabbi. If He had not come we should be Jews; as He has come we are Catholics. We are logical in our faith, because we belong to the Church which, without the shadow of an historical doubt, *certainly* comes from His day (whether others do or not), to the Church to which He made His promises, the Church over which He placed Peter as His vicegerent and vicar, the Church which has, for nineteen centuries, realized His promises, and which to-day, and at all times, has, and has had, the characters or signs or "marks" by which He wished His Church to be known, and which He Himself pointed out as the credentials of the work of His founding. Let us see what this means.

(a) When the Baptist St John sent to ask Jesus: "Art thou He that is to come, or look we for another?" His

answer was to point to His work as His credentials. "Go, and tell John what you have heard and seen: the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead rise again, the poor have the gospel preached to them.[1] Here is a double sign of His mission, (1) miracles proving His divinity, (2) the gospel preached to the poor showing His mission to the world. These signs are found, and always have been, in the Catholic Church. (1) Miracles for many years attested her divine institution, as the indwelling of God within her. Miracles however are not always needed in the Church. When once her divinity is established beyond a doubt, the necessity for proving it no longer remains, and so miracles are not essential and necessary *criteria*, in all times, of her truth. As St Gregory argues, we water a plant when it is weakly and young and growing; but when it has grown to maturity and become a great tree there is no longer need for the watering-pot. Miracles, he continues, were the water which helped the youthful Church to grow, but now that she has "become a tree" they are not essential to her expansion. Still, lest this should be brought as an argument against her, God has continued to work miracles in the Catholic Church, but in no other church, all through the ages; and miracles are wrought even to-day. Lourdes is a reality which none can gainsay, and to which even unbelievers have been constrained to give an unwilling testimony. A well-known medical man practising in London was accustomed to call Lourdes "the doctor's enemy." (2) The second part of our Lord's testimony to His work is, and has always been, realized in the Catholic Church; the poor have always had the gospel preached to them. Kings and queens and nobles, learned and wise men have knelt at her feet; but she has always been pre-eminently "the Church of the poor." From the day when our Lord sent the message to St John, and the day when St Peter said "Gold and silver have I none,"[2] and

[1] Matt. xi, 5. [2] Acts iii, 6.

the day when St Paul wrote "The little things of the world hath He chosen, and the weak things and the things which are not,"[1] and the day when St Lawrence the deacon brought the poor to the prefect of Rome, and introduced them as "the treasures of the Church," they have ever been her tenderest solicitude and at the same time her greatest strength and support.

(b) Another sign which our Lord gave by which He and His were to be known, was that "because they were not of this world," therefore the world would hate them and persecute them. "If they have persecuted Me, they will persecute you."[2] We have only to take up a volume of Church history and look through its pages and we shall see "persecution" written in large letters over every century. To-day in our own age, as well as in the ages that have passed, the Church has been the butt of persecution in China and Japan, in Africa, nay even in Europe. Germany, Italy, France have raised their hands to strike her, and thus unwittingly to bear witness to her divine character. It is not many years since England sheathed in the scabbard the sword which for three centuries had been drawn, and closed her prison doors which had been opened, and put away her instruments of torture which had been used with such deadly effect against the Catholic Church. The Gordon riots are not yet ancient history. Tyburn and Smithfield are only just things of the past. Persecution cannot hurt the Church, any more than the arrow of the savage can extinguish the sun's light. What God hath joined together, no man can put asunder, and He has wedded His Church to Himself in eternal wedlock. The persecution of men only proves their own impotence, and shows the fulfilment of God's promise. Gamaliel was right, although he was a pharisee and a doctor of the law: "If this work be of men, it will fall to nothing; but if it be of God you are not able to destroy it; lest perhaps you

[1] 1 Cor. i, 27. [2] John xv, 20.

oppose God."[1] We have no fear for the Church. When the Roman emperor was crossing the Adriatic, and the rowers of his boat were terrified at the threatening storm, he said to them by way of encouraging them : "Why do ye fear? Do you not know that you carry Caesar?" We do not fear, because we carry Christ, or rather He bears us up in His arms. Persecution only reveals His presence, manifests His power, and proves that we are His, because we inherit His promise.

(c) There are, however, especially four characters or signs or "marks" by which the true Church of Christ is known in all ages. Where these are not found, where even one of them is wanting, it may be called *a church*, but it is not His Church, it is a bastard church, an illegitimate offspring, the church of man, and not the Church of the living God. Where all of the marks exist there is His Church without the shadow of a doubt. (1) The first sign is *Unity;* (2) the second *Sanctity;* (3) the third *Catholicity;* (4) the fourth *Apostolicity.* The true Church of Christ's founding, must be ONE, HOLY, CATHOLIC, AND APOSTOLIC.

[1] Acts v, 38, 39. The Greek text is more expressive than the Douay translation: "lest you *fight against God.*"

CHAPTER XII

UNITY OF THE CHURCH

UNITY is the law of truth. Wherever truth is, it must be one. The true Church must be one Church, a united Church. You cannot divide truth, any more than you can separate the ray from the sun. Unity in the Church means oneness of teaching, of worship, of organization, of government. All these presuppose one head, a visible head of a visible Church, an invisible head if the Church is invisible, a visible and an invisible head if the Church is both visible and invisible. In all these the divine Church must be one, always and everywhere united. Division would mean death, union means life. It must be so. As the same sun is the universal sun, shining everywhere, in France, Italy, Germany, in the other hemisphere, the same sun shining always through all the ages since God said: "Let there be light . . . . and light was made"; so must it be with God, and so with His Church. God is one, always one, everywhere one, essentially one; so must the Church, His mouth-piece, be one—always, everywhere, essentially one. Truth is one as light is one; the Church, the organ of truth, must be one in like manner. "Tear the ray from the sun's substance, unity will not admit this division of light; break the branch from the tree, it will not bud when broken; cut off the channel from the spring, it will dry up." So with the Church. "Thus the Church, flooded with the light of the Lord, puts forth her rays through the whole world, with yet one light which is spread upon all places, whilst the unity of the body is not infringed. She stretches forth her branches over the universal earth, in the riches of plenty, and pours abroad her bountiful and onward streams; yet there is one head, one source, one mother abundant in

the results of her fruitfulness. . . . It is of her womb we are born, our nourishing is from her milk, our quickening from her breath."[1]

1. The types of the Church were figures of unity: the ark of Noe, the Garden of Eden, the tabernacle. The Jewish religion, "the figure, the shadow of the better things to come," was one. "Go not into the way of the Gentile," and "Let not the stranger dwell in thy midst," was God's way of protecting and preserving that unity. God was jealous of this unity: "How long halt ye between two sides?" Elias His prophet cried out on Carmel. "If Baal be God, follow him; but if the Lord be God, then follow the Lord."[2] Both cannot be right, only one can be true. When Jeroboam raised an altar and offered incense to another, the altar was rent, and the arm with which he laid hold of "the man of God" was withered, and he was not able to withdraw it. The terrible instance of the punishment of Core, Dathan and Abiron manifested God's hatred of disunion, it was His condemnation of schism.

2. Then when our Lord came, "unity" was His motto; the unity of truth ran through His life and His teaching as blood runs through the body of a man, giving life to His work and connecting His words and His promises into one sacred deposit of truth. His parables and His similes all weave the same web of union. "The one Shepherd" and "the one fold," with the sheep that were outside being made to come in, that they might be a united fold[3] The "vine" and the branches the branches having to be united to the vine if they were to have sap and to live and to bear fruit; if, however, the branches were cut off from union with the vine, they were to wither and die and be cast into the fire to burn.[4] The one "field" in which even the cockle, or evil weed, must be allowed to remain till the harvest, lest uprooting the cockle, the wheat should be uprooted with it,

[1] St Cyprian, *De Unitate,* tract. v, n. 4.
[2] 3 Kings, xviii, 21. [3] John x, 16. [4] John xv.

and so disunion be brought about: but at the harvest the wheat has to be gathered into the barn, and the cockle to be cast into the fire.[1] The "kingdom of God," with its one king, its laws, its united government.[2] The "vineyard" in which all were to labour if they were to receive "the hire."[3] The "ship" in which He sat who bade the waves: "Peace, be calm, be still."[4] Every parable of the divine Teacher which refers to the Church refers to it under some symbol which implies union and unity.

3. The life of Jesus Christ, which formed the opening chapter of the Church's history, points to the same truth. "He called together whom He would." "Come, follow Me." "If any will be My disciple, let him come after Me." He tells His apostles: "If any will not hear the Church, let him be to you as the heathen and the publican," i.e., excommunicated from the Church. "He that heareth you heareth Me." At the most solemn moment of His life on earth, when He speaks to His apostles for the last time, and gives them His last legacy of love, He dwells upon the necessity of unity, and lifting up His eyes to heaven He prays: "Holy Father, keep them in Thy name whom Thou hast given Me; that they may be one as We also are."[5] From first to last His life, His teaching, His preaching, His prayer, all make for union, all imply unity.

4. The apostolic Church was a united Church. "They had all one mind and one heart in the Lord."[6] In "one spirit they were all baptized into one body."[7] They all belonged to the "one household of faith." They had "one Lord, one faith, one baptism," and so formed "one body and one spirit,"[8] all being "one in Christ Jesus."[9] It could not be otherwise; for as St Paul said triumphantly: "Is Christ divided?" The apostle asked the question that he might enforce the moral: "that there

[1] Matt. xiii. [2] Matt. xii, 25. [3] Matt. xx, 4.
[4] Matt. viii. [5] John xvii, 11. [6] Acts iv, 32.
[7] 1 Cor. xii, 13. [8] Eph. iv, 4. [9] Gal. iii, 28.

might be no schism in the body,"[1] the body being the Church, for "you are the body of Christ and member for member."[2] The apostles "had the mind of Christ," and the mind of Christ was "unity."

5. The words of the early fathers of the Church show that they, too, had "the mind of Christ"; they form an eloquent gloss on the apostolic teaching. Had they been writing in this twentieth century, their words could hardly have been more applicable, their similes more apposite. Although those were the primitive ages, and although they are looked upon as the most Christ-like of Christian times, even then they had to write against heretics. The Church was from the very beginning in conflict with heresy and error. When was she not in conflict? When will she ever cease to be militant on earth? Never! For men's minds are "perverse," and the spirits of evil are "let loose." St Cyprian wrote in the third century—had he written thus in the twentieth, he would have been stigmatized "a bigot" and "narrow-minded"—"Whoever is separated from the Church of Christ . . . . is cut off from the promises of Christ. He who deserts the Church of Christ obtains not the reward of Christ. He is an alien, he is profane, he is an enemy. He cannot have God for his Father who has not the Church for his mother. If a man had been outside the ark of Noe, could he have escaped drowning? Even so if a man is out of the Church. He who holds not to this unity holds not to the faith of the Father and the Son, nor the truth that is to salvation."[3] In another place he writes: "Neither does this baptism of blood profit one who is not in the Church of Christ. . . . If he is put to death for the name of Christ when *out of the Church, and separated from unity and charity*, although he has confessed Christ, he cannot be crowned."[4] St Augustine wrote later, but still there were heretics, and his language

[1] 1 Cor. xii, 25.
[2] Ibid. 27.
[3] *De Unitate*, tract v, n. 5.
[4] *Epist.* lxxiii, n. 18.

is no less forcible. He was arguing against an attempt to institute in Africa a national church, such as was "established" in England three centuries ago: "How could it happen that Christ should lose his inheritance, and find Himself reduced to a portion of Africa (substitute England)?"[1] Again: "Nothing can be more grievous than that you be separated by the dark sacrilege of schism,"[2] schism meaning separation from the one Church. Once more: "The universal Church securely judges that they cannot be good who separate themselves from the universal Church or any part of the universal Church."[3] Of these words Cardinal Newman writes that before his conversion, "they struck me with a power which I had never felt before."[4] What would St Augustine have written about England, Germany, Switzerland, Henry VIII, Luther and Calvin, had he lived in the century of their revolt? We may judge from what he wrote of Petilian[5]: "Therefore whosoever draws away any one from the universal Church to any sect is a murderer and a child of Satan." The great saintly Bishop of Hippo, the saint of the large mind and larger heart, has written much upon unity. We must content ourselves with one more citation which is eminently to the point: "The question between us is: 'Where is the Church in all nations? (Luke xxiv.) And you who are not in communion with all nations, how can you be His sheep? Where His Church is, there is His fold. Whoever draw away men from this fold are but ravening wolves that slay the sheep by separating them from unity.'"[6]

6. This union or unity foretold by prophets, preached by the divine Founder of the Church, existing in the Church in apostolic days and upheld in "the Church of the Fathers," has always been in the Catholic Church an heir-

[1] *Epist.* xlix. *to Honoratus*, n. 3.
[2] *Contra Parmenian.* lib. II, n. 2.
[3] Ibid. lib. III, n 24. [4] *Apologia*, p. 213. [5] Lib. II, n. 30.
[6] *Cont. Petilian.* lib. II, n. 164.

loom, an inheritance which is entailed. It passes from generation to generation, from pontiff to pontiff, from people to people, through the ages. The Church has always had one head, the successor of the head appointed by Jesus Christ our Lord. She has always had one and the same organization. Her hierarchy of pontiffs, bishops and priests remains unbroken—no link is wanting to the chain. She has always had the same government. Consequently she has always been one.

Her unity to-day is evident. We need not refer to scriptures, or fathers, or history. We have only to open our eyes and see, our ears and hear, our intellects and we shall understand, not only that the Catholic Church is one, but that she must be one, that she cannot be divided. She is one in her doctrines. Everywhere the same creeds are recited, the same doctrines preached, the same worship of the same divine presence in the Blessed Sacrament, because the same faith in that mystery everywhere prevails. Everywhere the same government. Everywhere the same head. Doctrines are one and the same, because all follow the teaching of the same infallible Church, with the same infallible pontiff at its head. Catholics may not teach as they like, or believe as they choose. Doctrine comes from one source, Jesus Christ our Lord. It comes through one and one only channel, the Church. The government is one and the same everywhere, because all submit with one heart and soul, and profess their submission with one voice to the sovereign pontiff, the pontiff who is the successor in line direct from that Peter whom they believe to have been named by Christ His own representative in the government and teaching of the Church. Every bishop throughout the Catholic world is named, appointed or approved directly by "Rome," and receives his powers from that one perennial source of jurisdiction and power. Every priest is ordained by a bishop who receives authority from the pope to ordain, and so, indirectly, the jurisdiction and

priestly power come from the same source. Every layman or lay-woman or child receives sacraments from the priest, ordained by the bishop appointed by the pope, and therefore unity prevails. This is not a point to be discussed in words; it is proved by practical experience. We travel the world over, and we *find* unity; we *see* unity; we *experience* unity in the Catholic Church; we *hear* it in the sermons preached in every tongue; we *read* it in Catholic books printed in every language under the sun; we *see* it in the worship carried out in every Catholic temple all over the wide world; we *feel* the sacred influence of this unity in the same sacraments, received in the same manner and with the same belief in their number, their efficacy and their power, wherever we may go.

Not only is it so, it *must* be so; it cannot be otherwise. There are two safeguards of Catholic unity, which effectively and effectually prevent disunion. The first is the one common authority which pervades the Catholic world, an authority both in teaching and administration, a doctrinal and legislative power, which all reverently and religiously obey, and must obey, if they are Catholics at all. The second safeguard is the power of excommunication, which all Catholics admit as existing in the Church. If they rebel against authority, or refuse to accept any article of the Catholic creed, in the Catholic sense, they are cut off, excommunicated; and so the Church *must* remain one. Lop a branch off a tree, the tree lives on, the branch dies. Amputate a member from the body, the body lives, the member dies. Disconnect the stream from the source, the source still gives forth water, but dry land succeeds to stream. So with the Church; members may go, the body remains one; branches may fall and fail, the vine still lives and bears fruit. The amputation of a diseased member is the salvation of the body; the lopping off a rotten branch preserves the life of the vine. In all permanent societies the power of excommunication exists.

In a country there are prisons (the "minor" excommunication) that lawless citizens may be excommunicated for a time, and there is the power of life and death (which is the "major" excommunication) from which there is no appeal. In a club, the power of expulsion is in the hands of the members. In a place of business, dismissal is the form of excommunication. In the army even an officer, if he be unworthy of the name, may be suspended and be deprived of his commission. In a family an unruly son may be denied the father's home, or may be disinherited by his father's will. It is thus societies preserve their integrity, their unity and their good name. In the Church excommunication keeps the Church united, by the ejection of those who follow not her mind, and obey not her will, but who are led by their own spirit into error.

7. Outside the Catholic fold we shall seek in vain for a united church. The late Dr Tait, when Archbishop of Canterbury, defined church unity as "a sympathy that unites us in common forms both of worship and doctrine, and in a willing and reverential deference to properly constituted authority."[1] That definition is the condemnation of the system, of which he was then the chief representative in England. For where can you find there this "sympathy," this "unity in common forms, either of worship or doctrine"? Both doctrine and worship vary according to the will of teacher and worshipper, or according to the pulpit or the place of worship. Where can you see any "deference, reverential and willing," or otherwise, to any "properly constituted authority?" Or where is that authority at all? One church "high" another "low," one "broad" another "dry," one "evangelical" another "ritualistic," and yet all in the same ample "fold." There is no union there, nor can there be. Private judgement is the ruling principle, and individual views must

[1] *Charge delivered at Dover*, October 10, 1876.

spell disunion. Even in matters essential, in the fundamental tenets of the so-called "Reformation," "every one abounds in his own sense." The *raison d'être* of the revolt of the sixteenth century was separation from Rome. Yet, Archbishop Tait in the "charge" just quoted, after defining unity as the identity of "worship and doctrine," and "willing and reverential obedience to properly constituted authority," is forced to admit: "We find many people who ought to know better expressing extreme views scarcely consistent with the spirit of the Reformation of that Church which we have inherited. Devotional works, taken directly or indirectly from the Church of Rome, have been introduced . . . . the form of worship is gradually being changed, so that you might go into a Church of England church and, not being quite sure of the direction you had taken, suppose yourself to be in a Romish church. Ordinarily quiet and religious people are scandalized at what they see and hear . . . . they are told of the confessional being urged upon their families . . . . so it is not unnatural, with these undoubted facts staring them in the face, that the English people should be gradually disconcerted as to the way in which changes are being hurried on by the arbitrary will, in many cases, of the clergy, supported by a few of their immediate followers." Perhaps this fact, added to the admission of the inability and utter powerlessness of any "authority" in the Anglican Church, of which the speaker was then the chief minister, to put a stop to what he considers "a scandal" and a going back upon the very first principle of the "Reformation," may account for another statement in the same charge. "The number of conversions to the Romish communion which have taken place in our life-time has far exceeded that which has taken place from the Church of England in any other period of her existence, except, perhaps, that of the Stuarts, when there was a deliberate attempt to romanize the whole Church of England."

Anglicans, that were, preferred to be Catholics; and so they left Babel for Jerusalem, "the city of confusion" where there was no authority, for "the city of peace" where unity prevails, and prevails precisely because they are all "united both in common forms of worship and doctrine and in a willing and reverential deference to properly constituted authority."

8. Private judgement is the first insuperable obstacle to unity; where private opinion prevails it is evident that one mind amongst many cannot be the outcome. Another impediment to union and unity is the Anglican theory of a national church, condemned by the syllabus of Pope Pius IX in 1864. The nationality of a Church, i.e., a Church being confined to a nation, is the practical rejection of Catholicity and of a universal Church. National means restricted by rivers, seas, mountains or plains; universal means having no limits of either time or place, one always, one everywhere. Members of a national Church bear witness against themselves when they say the Apostles' Creed. "I believe in the holy Catholic Church," should read with them: "I believe in the holy Anglican, or the holy Scotch, or the holy German Church." A believer in a national church cannot, at the same time, be a consistent believer in a Catholic Church. A national church, with the king at its head, as he is the head of the army, the navy and the police, is incompatible with universality or catholicity. What connection is there, or can there be between the Russian Church, the German Church and the Anglican Church? How can they all three form part of the one holy Catholic Church? Where is the one visible head to unite them in a bond of visible union? Where are the laws common to all three? Where is there a creed which all three recite in the same words or in the same sense? Where the one government binding all three together? or the common forms of common worship which are the expressions of a common belief? There are none, nor can there be. The wolf will not dwell with the lamb, nor

the leopard lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the sheep will not abide together, nor will the little child lead them all into the one fold, unless they all live under the one "standard set up unto the nations," and unless God, under one government and one head, "shall gather together the dispersed of Juda from the four quarters of the earth."[1] The fatal consequences of this estrangement from unity St Cyprian tells us: "Let no one think they can be good men when they leave the Church. Wind does not take the wheat, nor do storms overthrow the tree that has a solid root to rest on. It is the light straw that the tempest tosses, it is trees emptied of their strength that the blow of the whirlwind strikes down. These the Apostle John curses and smites, saying: '*They went forth from us*, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us surely they would have remained with us.'"[2]

The Catholic Church is "the kingdom of all ages," and the kingdom of all kingdoms; the spiritual kingdom to which all national and temporal kingdoms belong. The members of this kingdom, "being many, are one," "many" in tongue, in clime, in country, "one" in faith, worship and Christian charity; having "one Lord, one faith, one baptism, as they are all called in the one hope of their calling."[3]

[1] Isa. xi, 6. [2] *De Unitate*, tract. v, n. 9. [3] Eph. iv, 4.

CHAPTER XIII

HOLINESS OF THE CHURCH

1. "Without faith it is impossible to please God," the Apostle tells us in his Epistle to the Hebrews.[1] He does not, however, affirm that with faith *alone* it is possible to please Him. "Only believe and then you shall be saved" is a proposition, to which a Catholic does not give his assent, simply as the proposition stands. Faith alone is not sufficient for salvation. The faith which *is* sufficient is a practical faith, a faith united to charity, a faith which prompts good works and holy living. The stereotyped inscription which we read on so many tombstones in our village churchyards:

> Nothing in my hand I bring,
> Only to Thy cross I cling,

is equivalent, if true, to a sentence of condemnation, and is not, as it is intended to be, a decree of canonization. Faith must "work through charity," it must be accompanied by good works. "My just man *liveth* by faith" is the Apostle's definition of faith, which he borrows from the prophet Habacuc;[2] and which he repeats in his Epistle to the Hebrews,[3] in his Epistle to the Romans,[4] and again when writing to the Galatians.[5] He preaches this doctrine of the necessity of holiness of life and of the love of God being wedded to faith, in uncompromising words in his first Epistle to the Corinthians, in the thirteenth chapter, which reads like a theological treatise on the subject of faith working through charity, or the union of faith with good works inspired by the love of God. "If I should have all faith so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing." He tells us too that he might

[1] xi, 6. [2] ii, 4. [3] x, 38. [4] i, 17. [5] iii, 11.

"speak with the tongues of men and angels," he might "have prophecy, and know all mysteries, and distribute all his goods to the poor," he might even "deliver his body to be burned" in martyrdom, but without charity it would "profit him nothing," he would be only "as sounding brass and tinkling cymbals," *vox et præterea nihil*, all would be as empty words.

This is the Catholic teaching; it is an article of the Catholic creed. In the catechism the little Catholic child is asked, and is asked on the very first page: "What must you do to save your soul?" and the answer comes, the Church's creed: "I must worship God by faith, hope and charity; that is, I must believe in Him, hope in Him and love Him with my whole heart." First comes faith. Then hope is born of faith. For hope is the confidence which faith in God inspires in His goodness. It is a trusting belief, a belief that if we carry out, practically, the principles and doctrines of faith to their legitimate conclusion, which is good works, God will give us grace now and glory hereafter. "I know whom I have trusted, and I am certain that He is able to keep that which I have committed to Him against that day,"[1] is the language of Christian hope. Then comes charity, making up the trinity of theological virtues, which unites us to God.

2. Faith is necessary for salvation; hope is the first-born of faith; but charity is higher and greater and—may we add?—more indispensably necessary than either. Charity, or the love of God, with which, as St Thomas tells us, fraternal charity, or the love of our fellow-men, is begotten—both springing from a common source as two arrows from a bow, or as two streams from the same source—is the queen of virtues, all others being ministers, messengers, and courtiers. Charity is faith in practice. It implies holiness of life, singleness of purpose, and a purity of mind, heart and life which enables us to "see God." St Paul extols faith—the faith of Noe, of Moses, of

[1] 2 Tim. i, 12.

Abraham, of the prophets[1]—but he has a higher encomium for the charity prompted by faith. "Now there remain faith, hope and charity, these three: but the greatest of these is charity,"[2] i.e., union with God and holiness of life. Charity is the greatest, the highest, the noblest because, as St Thomas Aquinas argues,[3] it unites us to God. Faith and hope bring us near to Him, or bring Him near to us, as an astronomical instrument brings the heavenly bodies near to the scientific observer; but charity unites us to God, it is the embrace of the soul and God. Faith reveals to us "in a dark manner," as though reflected in a mirror, things which are not seen; hope gives us confidence that we shall see and possess Him, whom as yet we only see in the dim mysterious way; but charity rises above the earth on golden wings, ascends to God, and is united in bonds of affection with Him who is the Highest, the Greatest and the Best above all things. Charity is the greatest again because it is immortal; "charity never faileth."[4] Faith and hope will die, they will find no place in heaven, but charity will live for ever.

They sin who tell us love can die.
With life all other passions fly,
All others are but vanity;
In heaven ambition cannot dwell,
Nor avarice in the vaults of hell:
Earthly, these passions of the earth,
They perish where they have their birth:
But love is indestructible;
Its holy flame for ever burneth,
From heaven it came, to heaven returneth.
Too oft on earth a troubled guest,
At times deceived, at times opprest,
It here is tried and purified,
Then hath in heaven its perfect rest;
It soweth here with toil and care,
But the harvest-time of love is *there.*

[1] Heb. xi.
[2] 1 Cor. xiii, 13.
[3] *Summa,* 1ª 2dae, lxvi, 6.
[4] 1 Cor. xiii, 8.

Charity or holiness of life is one of the credentials of the true Church of Christ, one of the marks by which she is to be known—holiness in the Church and a holy life in her children. "Christ loved the Church, and delivered Himself up for it, that He might sanctify it, cleansing it by the laver of water in the word of life; that He might present to Himself a glorious Church not having spot or wrinkle, nor any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."[1] The members of His Church, although there might be and would be cockle amongst the wheat, as there was a Judas in the apostolic college of the twelve, were to be men and women of holy and united lives. "In this shall all men know that you are My disciples if you have love one for another."[2] His word, "Be ye perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect,"[3] was intended for the members of the Church. "He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and unspotted in His sight, in charity."[4] We were to "serve Him in holiness and justice all our days."[5] The members of His Church were to be redeemed "from all iniquity," "cleansed to Himself," a people acceptable, a pursuer of good works.[6] His own last prayer to His Father was, as for the unity, so for the holiness of His Church: "Sanctify them in truth. My word is truth. . . . And for them do I sanctify Myself that they also may be sanctified in truth."[7]

3. The true Church must be holy in this sense. (1) She must "raise the standard" of holiness to the people by teaching them a doctrine which leads to holiness; (2) she must offer to them helps and means to attain sanctity of life and holiness of purpose; (3) she must encourage them to a holy, and yet holier, life, saying to them: "Go up higher," "*sursum corda*—lift up your hearts to God," "*Excelsior*—never rest, go up higher and

[1] Eph. v, 25-27. [2] John xiii, 35. [3] Matt. v, 48. [4] Eph. i, 4. [5] Luke i, 75. [6] Tit. ii, 14. [7] John xvii, 17-19.

higher still;" (4) then, as a consequence of her standard of holiness, her helps to sanctity, her encouragement even to the perfect life, although all her children, individually, may not be holy, she must be "distinguished by the eminent holiness of many."

The standard of holiness in the Catholic Church is never lowered, never even "half mast high." She is always calling upon her children not only to go to Sinai and learn the commandments, and then practise them in their daily lives, but to ascend the mountain of the Beatitudes and learn to be "poor in spirit," "meek," "clean of heart," "merciful," and "peacemakers" amongst men. She begins with children. The fidelity of the Catholic Church to the cause of Christian education, in all times, in all places, is a sign that she is true to this characteristic of the true Church, and that she is deeply in earnest in leading souls to God. Her conduct in England contrasts most favourably with the laxity of others on this point. At immense sacrifices she has preserved her schools, whereas others have surrendered theirs to the godless system. And why? Simply that she might guard the souls of the little ones, and teach them "holiness and justice," piety and godly living. Then as they get older, "in season and out of season she exhorts, rebukes, commands in all patience and all doctrine"[1]—in sermons, in special seasons of grace, such as Lent and Advent, in her missions and retreats, by means of spiritual books; she is always holding up the standard and endeavouring to lead young and old, rich and poor, learned and unlearned to piety and religion. From cradle to grave she offers them means of holiness, helps to God.

There are the seven sacraments, seven channels of grace to the soul. As soon as a child is born it is baptized; it is "born again of water and the Holy Ghost," and becomes a child of God. When reason manifests its

[1] 2 Tim. iv, 2.

power, and with reason comes danger; confirmation strengthens the child for the battle of life. If, then, through the weakness of human nature, or from malice of will, or from strong temptation, the young or the old fall, the Church does not leave them to die by the wayside; there is the sacrament of penance, or confession, to pick them up and set them on their way again. We shall never know till "the hidden things of darkness are brought to light" what a wonderful help the sacrament of confession has been to countless souls on their way to holiness and God. Then there is the sacrament of strength, the Blessed Sacrament, "The Bread of Life," in the strength of which food they are enabled to "walk to the mountain of God." In matrimony, she blesses the wedded life, and gives grace to that sacred bond of union. The Church has never admitted an unholy and unlawful divorce, separating those whom God has joined, and leading to misery and sin. Her defence of the sacred integrity and indissolubility of marriage is a sign —which many others lack—of her giving to her children a means of holiness which otherwise would fail them. To her ministers' aid she comes, too, on the threshold of their new life, with the sacrament of orders. And when all, priests or people, ministers or flock, are about to leave the world for the mysterious life behind the veil, she, like a faithful mother, helps them to die with her viaticum and last anointing. Even her dead children she does not abandon. She follows them by her prayers to the world beyond the grave. If any of her children find themselves called to a better and holier life, she provides for them her confraternities and guilds, that, banded together, they may help each other onwards towards the goal. And should any, as many do, "wish to be perfect," i.e., to aim at a more perfect life, she has her religious orders of men and women, whether cloistered or actively helping others in the world, whose members "leave all things" like the apostles, and for the same reason, "to follow Christ."

With these helps and safeguards Catholics are enabled to "stretch forward to those that are before . . . . for the prize of the supernal vocation in Christ Jesus,"[1] and many live "in the world" without being "of the world," some even leading "the lives of angels amongst men." We do not claim for the Church that all her children are holy—far from it; but we do claim that her faithful children are so. If they are not holy, it is because for a period they cease to be loyal to their mother, obedient to her commands, and faithful to her teaching; and because they neglect the means of holiness which she has put into their power. Scandals there are in the Church, scandals there always have been, and always must be. "It is necessary that scandals should come,"[2] is the word of Him who died that His Church might be "holy and without blemish." Scandals are the dark background to the picture, throwing out the beauty and glory of the saints. Of these her sainted children there are "a glorious company" in every age, and in every part of the globe. To mention the names which come in our Litany of Saints is to command the assent of even those who are not "of the household of faith," to the truth of what we say; but the unknown saints whose "lives are hidden with Christ in God," are, as St John saw and revealed them, "a great multitude, which no man can number, of all nations and tribes and peoples and tongues."[3] The Catholic Church is "wonderful in her saints."

4. We do not for a moment wish to maintain that there is no sanctity, no holiness of life, outside the Catholic Church. God knows His own wherever they are. There may be, there are, single-minded men who have not the gift of faith, but who live up to the light which they have received, ready at any time if they saw their way to the truth, to make any and every sacrifice for God. We cannot speak of individuals, but only of a system. Of those outside the Catholic Church, then, as a body, we may

[1] Phil. iii, 13. [2] Matt. xviii, 7. [3] Apoc. vii, 9.

say, that the only saints whose names still remain in the calendar of their Church, are saints of the Catholic Church who lived before the Established Church was born. We may say again, that the founders of their churches began by laying down principles which do not make for sanctity, quite the reverse. Luther's denial of the necessity of good works, and his upholding that faith alone will save us; Calvin's doctrine of dark fatalism, which led him to teach that some are eternally reprobate, foredoomed to eternal damnation before all prevision of their sins, no matter whatever of good they may do; Henry VIII's doctrine that religion must be the manacled slave of the state. These creeds do not, any one must admit, help men to holiness of life and to God. The thirteenth and fourteenth of the thirty-nine articles, which hold, the one that "works done before the grace of God and the inspiration of His Spirit are not pleasant to God . . . . and we doubt not that they have the nature of sin," and the other that "voluntary works, over and above God's commandments, which they call works of supererogation, cannot be taught without arrogancy and impiety," hardly tend to make men "work out their salvation with fear and trembling," or aim, by good deeds of mercy and love, at holiness of life. Of the personal lives of the "reformers," as they are sometimes called, because they tried to reform the work of God—of Henry VIII, of Luther, and of their immediate followers—we say nothing. History has spoken, and God has judged them, so they are beyond the pale of our judgement. But if the record of history is not false, their example was not such as to lead men into the higher paths of grace and sanctity.

The rejection of five out of the seven sacraments; the condemnation of the higher life of perfection; the sitting in judgement upon our Lord's words to the young man: "If thou wilt be perfect, go, sell all thou hast and give to the

poor, and come and follow Me"[1]; the practical suppression of the divine word to St Peter: "Amen, I say to you that you who have left house and lands . . . . and have followed Me shall receive a hundredfold in this life and in the world to come life everlasting."[2] All this is hardly "holding up the standard to the people," or giving them means and aids to a higher life, or encouraging them by precept, counsel or example to sanctity and holiness. It does not point to the Church of the first-born. It does not re-echo either the Gospel of Christ or the teaching of His apostles, to which we have referred. Little wonder if they who are influenced by the Anglican Church's "Articles," and the lives of her first formers, do not realize in their own lives the words of Jesus Christ: "You are not of the world, I have chosen you out of the world."[3] Little wonder if her ministers should speak lightly and slightingly of their church, as being not divine but human, full of the imperfections which belong to mortal men. They give the key to words like those spoken on a public occasion by one of the most distinguished of her eminent deans. After stating that he "thought it was not too much to say that he expressed a hearty wish for the concurrent existence of all Christian communions, and that he thought a concurrent existence of the various communions in England a good and not an evil," he went on to add: "All institutions were mortal: the monarchy, the Houses of Parliament, the corporation of London, the Church of England itself. All these venerable institutions, like all earthly institutions, were mortal."[4] "Earthly" and "mortal" are not the words that either Jesus Christ or His apostles used when speaking or writing of the divine Church, nor do Catholics apply them to the one they call their mother. We prefer to look upon the Church—our Church—as the "Bride of Christ,"[5] the "heavenly Jerusalem,"[6] the "Body

[1] Matt. xix, 21. [2] Matt. xix, 29. [3] John xv, 19.
[4] Dean Stanley, May, 1874. [5] Eph. v, 23. [6] Apoc. iii, 12.

of Christ,"[1] the "Kingdom of God,'[2] the "Holy Mount of Sion,"[3] and by raising the standard of a high ideal, to lead the people onward and upward, to a life of holiness and justice, "worthy of the vocation to which they are called."[4]

[1] Col. i, 13. [2] Matt. xiii, 21. [3] Apoc. xxi, 10.
[4] Eph. iv, 1.

CHAPTER XIV

CATHOLICITY OF THE CHURCH

1. CATHOLICITY means Catholic or universal unity. Applied to a church, it implies the same doctrine, creed, worship, and government, everywhere and always. Continuity is another word for continuous or unbroken Catholic unity. It implies that a church has, ever and everywhere, been the same; that no link is missing from the chain; that all the members have ever through the ages, and in different lands, been united in all essential doctrines, in government and in worship. The famous *dictum* of Vincent of Lerins has become an axiom, almost, in polemical theology, *Quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus, Catholicum est*, "that which has been held always, everywhere, and by all is Catholic."

That Jesus Christ intended that His Church should be Catholic in the sense of its being the unchanged, unchanging and unchangeable Church of all nations and all times is a scriptural truth. That the Church which alone can obtain and vindicate for herself this name, and with the name the idea of "Catholic," with the prescriptive right of nearly nineteen hundred years to style herself "the Catholic Church"—Catholic in time and Catholic in country, geographically, numerically and historically Catholic—is the Church whose centre is in Rome, and which is therefore called "the Roman Catholic Apostolic Church,"—this is a fact, an incontestable fact, of history. That no other church can call itself, or prevail upon others to call it Catholic, or justify any claim to the title, is evident to the bodily senses of eye and ear.

2. In the fifth century St Augustine testified to this as being a fact in his days. "The Church is one, and our

ancestors call it *Catholic*, to show that it is spread throughout the nations. It is the body of Christ, and those who are not members of that body cannot share in the salvation merited by the head."[1] And again: "I am retained in the Church by the very name of *Catholic;* for it was not without reason that she alone, amid so many heresies, obtained that name. All the heretics desire to be called Catholics, yet if a stranger ask them which is the church of the Catholics, none of them dare to point out their church or house."[2] St Pacian had already, a century before, written in much the same strain: "There ought to be no contention about the name of Catholic. For if it is through God that our people obtain this name, no question is to be raised when divine authority is followed. . . . But under the apostles, you will say, no one was called Catholic. Be it thus. It shall have been so. Allow even that. When, after the apostles, heresies had broken out, and were striving under various names to tear piecemeal and divide the Dove and the Queen of God, did not the apostolic people require a name of their own, whereby to mark the unity of the people that were uncorrupted, lest the error of some should tear limb by limb the undefiled Virgin of God? Was it not seemly that the chief head should be distinguished by its own peculiar appellation? Suppose this very day I entered a populous city. When I had found Marcionites, Apollinarians, Cataphrygians, Novatians and others of the kind, who call themselves Christians, by what name should I recognize the congregation of my own people unless it were named Catholic? Come, tell me: who bestowed so many names on the other peoples? Why have so many cities, so many nations, each their own description? The man who asks the meaning of the Catholic name will he be ignorant himself of the cause of his own name if I shall inquire the origin? . . . This name 'Catholic' sounds

[1] *De Unitate Eccles.* i, 2.
[2] *Contra Epist. Manich.* Fund. n, iii.

not of Marcion, nor of Appelles, nor of Montanus, nor does it take heretics as its authors. . . . And yet, my brother, be not troubled; Christian is my name, but Catholic my surname. . . . And if at last we must give an account of the word Catholic. . . . 'Catholic' is 'everywhere one,' or, as learned men think, 'obedience in all.' . . . He who is Catholic, the same is obedient. . . . And people when named Catholic are separated by this appellation from the heretical name."[1]

In the nineteenth century the late venerated Cardinal Newman, after the lapse of fifteen hundred years, can appeal to the same argument. Speaking of the religion which St Augustine preached to our forefathers in England, he says: "There is one, and only one religion such; it is known everywhere; every poor boy in the street knows the name of it; there never was a time, since it first was, that its name was not known, and known to the multitude. It is called *Catholicism*, a world-wide name and incommunicable; attached to us from the first; accorded to us by our enemies; in vain attempted, never stolen from us by our rivals."[2] The cardinal had previously reminded his hearers in the Birmingham cathedral what were the tenets of St Augustine's preaching: "You know *what* religion has priests, and sacrifices, and mystical rites, and the monastic rule, and care for the souls of the dead, and the profession of an ancient faith, coming through all ages from the apostles."

3. The broad principle laid down by St Paul that "Christ wishes all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth,"[3] is at the root of the Catholicity of the Church. Our Lord came into the world for all men, and founded his Church for all: not only for all men of His day, but for all men of all days: "Lo, I am with you all days." The commission which He gave to His apostles

[1] *Epist.* 1 *ad Sympronian.* 5, 6, 7.
[2] Sermon on *Christ upon the Waters.* [3] 1 Tim. ii, 4.

was a Catholic commission, the commission to make His church Catholic: "Go, teach all nations, baptizing them,"[1] "Go ye into the whole world."[2] The "stone cut out of the mountain without hands" was a figure of the divine Church which was not of man's institution, and "it became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth."[3] The "kingdom" of the prophet's foretelling, "set up by the God of heaven," was "a kingdom that shall never be destroyed," nor "be delivered to another people"; it was to break into pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and "itself shall stand for ever."[4] It was to be in a word a Catholic kingdom. When the God of heaven came to set up this kingdom He came breathing the spirit of catholicity upon the world. In the first chapter of St John's gospel we have the foreshadowing of the Church's universality: "This was the true light that enlighteneth every man coming into this world." When He sent His apostles they were to evangelize the world: "Ye shall be witnesses to me in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa and Samaria, and even to the uttermost parts of the earth."[5] The lives of the apostles were spent in realizing these words. St Paul, "the last of the apostles," testifies to this. He applies to them the psalmist's words: "Their sound went over all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the whole world."[6] Pentecost was the first evidence of the catholicity of the Church, and the life of the Church since that day has been a perpetual Pentecost.

The holy scripture records the birth of the Church and the early development of her universality. History bears witness to its growth and continuity. Practical experience proves its actual Catholicity, the heirloom of ages, the inheritance received by the Church from Jesus Christ. Never perhaps, even in the ages of faith, was the Church as Catholic as she is to-day, and her Catholicity

[1] Matt. xxviii, 19. [2] Mark xvi, 15. [3] Daniel ii, 35.
[4] Ibid. 44. [5] Acts i, 8. [6] Romans x, 18.

is one with the catholicity of apostolic times. The little leaven soon changed the mass. The mustard seed had neither a winter nor a spring; it was born in summer, and at once it became a tree. The divine Victim of Calvary had hardly been "lifted up" before He "drew all hearts to Himself." The commission "Go, teach all nations" had scarcely been given before it was put into execution. The early fathers speak in a language of triumph which might almost seem exaggerated when they tell of the spread of the Church. Tertullian, Origen and St Cyril of Jerusalem seem to have written in an excess of zeal. "We are only a people of yesterday, yet we fill every place belonging to you," was a bold word to write to a Roman governor as early as the second century.[1] "I believe in the one holy Catholic Church. Her name is Catholic because she extends over the entire earth and reaches from end to end . . . . and teaches all the truths of faith which men need to know," emphasizes the same catholicity in words that one would have scarcely expected from St Cyril.[2] "The bishops stationed at the end of the earth" is the testimony of St Ignatius the Martyr, who was put to death in the year 107. The seed has never ceased to grow, the tree has ever been spreading out its branches. As new people have been discovered and new countries have been opened out, the Church has never lost sight of her commission, "Go, teach all nations." When Columbus set sail on his voyage of discovery, the Church was represented on board the little ship, destined to make history, by her priests, who claimed the newly-found people for the Church as the great admiral planted on their shores the standard of the King of Spain. This was typical of the Church's action throughout the ages. The spirit of conquest has been brought as an accusation against the Church. As in our Lord's time the chief priests and the Pharisees in their council complained, and said: "What

[1] Tertullian, *Apology*, i, 37. [2] *Catech.* xviii, 23.

do we? for this man doth many miracles? If we let Him alone so, all men will believe in Him, and the Romans will come and take away our place and nation,"[1] so have they complained, and with reason, of His Church. Our own English historian, Hume, has written, and he does but echo words that have often been written and spoken before: "Such zeal of proselytism actuates that sect (the Roman Catholic) that its missionaries have penetrated into every part of the globe; and in one sense there is a popish plot perpetually carrying on against all states—Protestant, pagan and Mahometan."[2] We plead guilty to the accusation; we must be guilty of proselytism if we are to continue to hold our proud title of "Catholic." "Go into the highways and byways, and compel them to come in, that my house may be full,"[3] "Go, teach all nations," are words which justify us in admitting the charge. The true Church must be "actuated by zeal of proselytism," and must carry on "a perpetual plot." Our colleges and novitiate houses are the nurseries of future proselytizers. The *Propaganda* in Rome was specially instituted, as the name implies, to propagate the Church, to prepare apostles to go and proselytize in every part of the world. The apostles were the first Catholic proselytizers. The words apostle and proselytizer are convertible terms. St Lewis Bertrand, St Peter Claver, St Vincent Ferrer, St Francis Xavier, were all actuated by the zeal of proselytism. The missionaries in China, Japan, the Indies, and in Africa are all carrying on this same "popish plot." May God in His goodness send us more such proselytizers, for "the harvest is great, the fields are white," but the labourers, alas! are few.

Persecutions in all ages and in all lands have tried to check this zeal and put down this plot, and to prevent the Church from becoming or remaining Catholic. Persecution has almost been as catholic as the Church herself, catholic both in time

[1] John xi, 47, 48. [2] xxii, Charles II. [3] Luke xiv, 23.

and in place. But, like the Hebrew slaves in Egypt, the more the Church's ministers have been oppressed, the more they have increased and multiplied. The seed has died, and from its death has come life, and from the life "much fruit." Touch the coral in the sea, and you do but harden it; so with the Catholic Church, persecution strengthens its growth. After centuries of oppression, the Church is still catholic. Take a map of the world, and tint in red the countries where the Church exists to-day, or in black the countries where she has not made a home, and you will realize better her catholicity. The Vatican Council held in 1869 and 1870, with nearly eight hundred[1] bishops and representatives of the Church coming from all parts of the world, not at the invitation, but at the bidding, of one venerable old man, was an object-lesson in the actuality of catholicity. The aged and revered pontiff was Pius IX, and his claim upon their obedience was his sovereignty as successor of St Peter in the headship of the Catholic Church. Unity and catholicity were visible evidences of truth in that august assembly of the *ecclesia docens*, or teaching Church. It was the spirit of the first century still living in the nineteenth, for "they were all of one heart and one mind in the Lord."[2] The Council of the Vatican was to the nineteenth age what the Council of Jerusalem was to apostolic days.

4. Nowhere outside the Catholic Church can this universality be seen, either universality of time or of place. No other Church claims the title of catholic; for though many say the creed, and profess to believe "in the Catholic Church," when they rise from their knees, ask them if they are Catholics; they will answer with an indignant, "No." Ask them further if they are in union with the Church in Italy, France or Germany; again they will say, "No." Well that they do not claim the title, well they do not pretend to the name. If they claim to have existed in all

[1] The actual number was 764. [2] Acts iv, 32.

times, we have only to go to our libraries, and take down our books of history; these tell-tale registers will give us the date of the birth of each and of all. Arians, Nestorians, Manichaeans, Calvinists, Lutherans, Protestants, all are recorded; the day of their birth, the name of their father; and the dates are centuries, some of them sixteen centuries, after the death of Christ, the Founder of the true Christian Church. Luther's burning of the papal Bull; the beginning of Calvin's new and dismal creed; Henry VIII's rejection of the pope's authority when the Vicar of Christ would not, because he could not, pander to the monarch's sensualism and sin—all are there: the year, the day, the hour. None of them stand the test of Vincent of Lerins' criterion of catholicity: "that which has been held *always*, everywhere and by all is catholic."

Catholicity of place, still more evidently, is wanting to any and every other Church, because it is a still more patent fact. The national church theory is prohibitive of catholicity. "National" means restricted to a nation, bounded by limits of water or land; "Catholic," on the contrary, means limitless and unbounded. The Jewish religion was not a catholic religion, nor was it intended to be. "Go not into the way of the gentiles," and "Do not allow the stranger to join himself with you,"[1] rendered catholicity an impossibility. So is it with national churches. Even granting, for argument's sake, that Protestants are found "everywhere," they are not the *same* Protestants everywhere, possessing the same creed, and governed by the same laws, and subject to the same ruling and teaching power. Germany, England, Switzerland are distinct nations; German, English and Swiss Protestants are distinct and different Protestants, having distinct and different creeds. Luther, Calvin and Henry VIII were most markedly distinct personalities; so were the tenets of their various and varying creeds. In no ways are they united,

[1] Num. xviii, 4.

either with each other or even in their followers, in doctrine, worship or government; there is no universal unity, therefore no catholicity. There is neither extrinsic nor intrinsic union; each is separate from the other and from every other Church in the world. "I believe in the one holy Catholic Church" may be a profession in words, it can be nothing more. Cardinal Newman puts it in his own simple and striking way: "How different are all religions that ever were from the lofty and unchangeable Catholic Church! They depend on time and place for their existence; they live in periods or regions. They are children of the soil, indigenous plants, which readily flourish under a certain temperature, in a certain aspect, in moist or in dry, and die if they are transplanted. Their *habitat* is one article of their scientific description. Thus the Greek schism, Nestorianism, the heresy of Calvin, and Methodism, each has its geographical limit. Protestantism has gained nothing in Europe since its first outbreak." He then goes on to the contrast, the Catholic Church: "She is the same as she was three centuries ago, ere the present religions of the country existed; you know her to be the same; it is the charge brought against her that she does not change; time and place affect her not, because she has her source where there is neither time nor place, because she comes from the throne of the illimitable, eternal God."[1]

It was this contrast—the universality of the Church which "time and place do not affect," and the isolation of the Anglican Church, a child of the soil and an indigenous plant—which struck a blow at the great cardinal whom we have just quoted which made him reel, and gave him a shock from which he never recovered till he found himself in the Church which "comes from the throne of the illimitable and eternal God." He describes this pathetically in his "Apologia": the absence of the note of catholicity, the severe solitude, the clear separation of the Anglican

[1] *Discourses to Mixed Congregations*, xii, 250, 255.

Church from all past or existing churches. A friend, "very dear" to him "a Protestant still" in the year 1839, six years before he joined the Catholic communion, called his special attention to the words of St Augustine which we have already cited, and which were quoted in that year in an article in the August number of the Dublin Review by Dr Wiseman: "Securus judicat orbis terrarum." "He repeated these words again and again, and when he had gone they kept ringing in my ears. 'Securus judicat orbis terrarum.' . . . For a mere sentence the words of St Augustine struck me with a power which I never had felt from any words before. To take a familiar instance, they were like the 'Turn again, Whittington' of the chime; or to take a more serious one, they were like the 'Tolle lege, tolle lege' of the child, which converted St Augustine himself. 'Securus judicat orbis terrarum!' By those great words the theory of the *via media* was absolutely pulverized. . . . I became excited at the view thus opened upon me. . . . I had seen the shadow of a hand upon the wall. It was clear that I had a great deal to learn on the question of the Churches, and that, perhaps, some new light was coming upon me."[1]

The words referred to by the distinguished cardinal are St Augustine's testimony to the necessity of belonging to the universal, i.e., the Catholic Church, and the consequent danger of schism: "Therefore the universal Church securely judges that they cannot be good who separate themselves from the universal Church in any part of the world."[2] All ought to be able to unite in heart and mind, in soul and voice in the profession of faith of all ages: "I believe in the holy Catholic Church."

[1] *Apologia*, p. 211 et seq.
[2] *Epist. contra Parmenian.* lib. II, n. 2.

CHAPTER XV

APOSTOLICITY OF THE CHURCH

1. THE apostolicity of the Church, that is her catholicity in time, her existence in all ages from the apostolic age to our own, is an historical rather than a polemical question; it enters into the scope of history, and not, except theoretically, into that of creed. That the true Church of Christ, if it exists in the world to-day, must be apostolic; that it must come down from Christ through His apostles by a continuous and unbroken succession, "receiving doctrine, orders and mission from them," is an article of our Catholic creed. But it is a self-evident profession; else how can it be the Christian Church, if it does not come from Christ? That any particular Church does, or does not, come down in a direct line from apostolic days, with the doctrines, the worship, the government of the Church of the apostles, is a question for historians to decide. Apostolicity implies continuity, and in the continuity discussion we Catholics appeal to the historical evidence of all times.

Apostolicity must be a note, or mark, of the Christian Church. This is, or ought to be, clear to every reasoning mind. Even the Thirty-nine Articles recognize that in "the visible Church of Christ" "the sacraments [ought to] be duly ministered *according to Christ's ordinance*, in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same."[1] For this purpose, as you follow a river to its source, an effect to its cause, a tree to the seed from which it grew, so must you trace the Church of Christ to Him and to His apostles. "The Church of Christ" and "the Church of the apostles" are convertible and practically synonymous terms. Whatever you predicate of the one you may predi-

[1] Art. xix.

cate of the other. The true Church then must be the apostolic Church. We make this profession in the Nicene Creed, which has been the summary of the Church's belief since the year 325: "I believe in one holy Catholic *apostolic* Church." This is one of the three creeds of which even the Thirty-nine Articles say that they "ought to be thoroughly received and believed, for they may be proved by most certain warrants of holy scripture"[1]; the other two being the Apostles' and Athanasian Creeds. By this profession then the Anglican Church must stand or fall. If it is one, holy, Catholic and apostolic, it stands; if it lacks either unity, sanctity, catholicity or apostolic succession, it falls. The true Church must be the one, holy, Catholic Church; it must be more, it must teach the doctrines taught by the apostles, it must succeed to their mission and their worship, and its form of government must be one with the government of the apostolic Church. To deviate from one or other of these is evidence of falsity. To be of more recent date in any of these characteristics is a sign of heresy, or schism, or of both heresy and schism. This is St Irenæus's criterion: "All heretics come much later than the bishops to whom the apostles committed the Church."[2] If a Church can be shown to have originated in an age posterior to the apostolic age; if there was ever a time—be it only a century, a decade of years or a decade of days—since the days of SS. Peter and Paul, when any existing Church has not existed, that Church stands self-convicted. If there was ever a century, or the fractional part of a century, since the early Christian times, when any existing Church had not a ministry coming down in direct line from the ministry of the apostles; if there is only one little link missing in the chain of years connecting the ages—that Church is not the lineal descendant of the Church which Christ established in the world. "No one can lay any other foundation than that which is laid, which is Christ

[1] Art. viii. [2] *Adv. Hæres.* III, iii.

Jesus . . . . according to the grace of God that is given me, as a wise architect I have laid the foundation," is St Paul's inspired word.[1] Every successive age must build on that foundation. None must begin a new building on a new foundation, else it is not of Christ's building. A new building upon a new foundation, raised in the sixteenth or even the third or second century, is not, and cannot be, the temple of the living God. A hierarchy which began in any century after the first Christian century is not, and cannot be, the hierarchy of the apostolic ministry. A creed which varies, jot or tittle, from the creed of the apostles is not Christ's creed. Once show, from historical records, that a Church began, a hierarchy was formed, a ministry had its first minister in a post-apostolic age, that is enough to condemn that Church as spurious, because not apostolic. The "bride of Christ" must always have lived with her spouse. The temple of God must have been built "upon the foundations of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner-stone, in whom all the building framed together groweth into a holy temple of the Lord."[2] This follows with a logical sequence from what we have said about the ever-abiding presence of Jesus Christ and the perpetual indwelling of the Spirit of God promised to the Church of Christ's founding. "Lo, I am with you all days,"[3] and "I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Paraclete who shall abide with you for ever,"[4] are weighty words, which, if they have any meaning, imply that the Church which He who spoke them founded was never to fail; that consequently the Church of the apostles is in the world to-day; and that it will still be in the world when the trumpet shall sound and bid the dead and buried ages "arise and come to judgement."

2. "No one can take the honour to himself" of beginning a new work, and then claiming for it either aposto-

[1] 1 Cor. iii, 10, 11. [2] Eph. ii, 20, 21. [3] Matt. xxviii, 20. [4] John xiv, 16.

licity or Christianity. No one can, in the name of God, build a visible superstructure upon any foundation but the visible "rock" upon which Christ said, "I will build My Church,"[1] any more than he can raise an invisible temple of God upon the "rock which is Christ," the "stone rejected by the builders which became the head of the corner."[2] The Church is only an "ambassador of Christ," and must, therefore, come from Him, sent by Him to deliver His message to the world. She has to "go and teach" the nations, "to preach the Gospel to every living creature." "But how can [she] teach unless [she] be sent"? "Even if an angel from heaven preach to you a gospel besides that which we have preached ["we" being the apostles], let him be anathema,"[4] because that apostolic Gospel "is not according to man," but "by the revelation of Jesus Christ."[5] "Christ is from God, and the apostles are from Christ," as St Clement of Rome expresses it: "and they," the apostles, having "proved" the first fruits of their apostolate by the Spirit, "set them as bishops and deacons over the faithful."[6] This was apostolic succession, and each succeeding age has carried on that succession. St Peter, the first Bishop of Rome, has lived in the Bishops of Rome who have followed in that see, without intermission, from the first to the twentieth century. The other apostles in their respective sees have lived in their respective successors during the ages. The successors of St Peter have named, or approved—and the successors of the twelve have consecrated—other bishops and priests to plant the Church in other parts of the world; and in this way apostolic succession has been carried on. There has been an unbroken continuity of ministry and a perfect hierarchic chain in the Church, of which the first links were the apostles, and the last links the bishops and priests of to-day. The chain,

[1] Matt. xvi, 18. [2] Acts iv, 11. [3] Rom. x, 15.
[4] Gal. i, 8. [5] Ibid. i, 12. [6] *Ad Corinthios* i, 42.

perfect up to the present time, is still being forged ; link will be added to link as the ages are born of the ages which die ; and thus the hierarchy will continue to the end, stretching from the day when our Lord was "taken up" from the mountain of His ascension to the day when, in fulfilment of the angel's promise, "He will come again." In the Catholic Church, which radiates throughout the world, from the centre which is in Rome, we have a clear and undeniable continuity. Even our enemies must admit this of us, whatever may be said of any other church or churches which venture to assert the same claim. And what *can* be said of other church or other churches? Christ only founded one, and this one clearly comes from Him. Evidently they must come from some one else, since "Christ is not divided," nor is He double-faced or double-tongued. Yet this Church—who can deny it?—comes from Him. They say of her that she has changed her creed, added to it, detracted from it ; that she has been "corrupt" ; that she has deviated from the right path. In saying this they reflect upon Him ; they imply that He has been wanting to His word that the "gates of hell should not prevail against her," and that He would be with her to all time. They assert these things, but they cannot deny our continuity.

St Augustine, in his day, to convince the unbeliever of the actuality of continuity, gave a list of the Bishops of Rome, the heads of the Church "from St Peter downwards." "Peter, to whom, as representing the whole Church, Christ said: 'Upon this rock I will build My Church.' For Peter was succeeded by Linus, and Linus, etc." And so he continues to his own time."[1] Our list is a longer one than St Augustine's; to his chain we add the links of 1,500 years. Bishop Milner, in his excellent book, "The End of Religious Controversy,"[2] quotes instances of other and earlier fathers of the Church showing continuity in the same way. St Irenæus

[1] *Epist.* liii, 2. [2] p. 245 (edit. 1896).

of Lyons, the disciple of St Polycarp, consecrated, it is thought, by the apostle St John, writes: "We can count up those who were appointed bishops . . . . by the apostles and their successors. . . . But as it would be tedious to enumerate the bishops in the outpost churches, we refer you to the greater, most ancient and universally known Church founded at Rome by St Peter and St Paul." Then he quotes their names. Tertullian argues in the same way, and concludes: "Let the heretics feign anything like this." May we not follow their reasoning, and produce our unbroken chain, which proves our continuity through the continuity of our visible head, the pope, with St Peter, "who was of Christ, who was of God"? And having studied the list, may we not repeat triumphantly Tertullian's words: "Let the heretics feign anything like this"? Let any church in the world show such a genealogical tree.

LIST OF THE ROMAN PONTIFFS

(The exact date of accession of many of the earlier Popes is uncertain.)

St Peter, Prince of the Apostles,

Having received from our Lord Jesus Christ the supreme pontificate, to be transmitted to his successors, established his See at Antioch; and thence transferred it, in 42, to Rome, where he suffered martyrdom June 29, 67.

	A.D.		A.D.
St Linus, M.	67	St Victor I, M.	193
St Cletus, M.	78	St Zephyrinus, M. ...	203
St Clement I., M. ...	90	St Callistus I, M. ...	221
St Anacletus, M. ...	100	St Urban I, M.	227
St Evaristus, M. ...	112	St Pontian, M.	233
St Alexander I, M. ...	121	St Anterus, M.	238
St Sixtus I, M.	132	St Fabian, M.	240
St Telesphorus, M. ...	142	St Cornelius, M.	254
St Hyginus, M.	154	St Lucius I, M.	255
St Pius I, M.	158	St Stephen I, M. ...	257
St Anicetus, M.	167	St Sixtus II, M.	260
St Soter, M.	175	St Dionysius	261
St Eleutherius, M. ...	182	St Felix I, M.	272

	A.D.		A.D.
St Eutychian, M. ...	275	Boniface III	607
St Caius, M.	283	St Boniface IV	608
St Marcellinus, M. ...	296	St Deusdedit I	615
St Marcellus I, M. ...	304	Boniface V	619
St Eusebius	309	Honorius I	625
St Melchiades	311	Severinus	640
St Sylvester I	314	John IV	640
St Mark	337	Theodore I	642
St Julius I...	341	St Martin I, M.	649
Liberius	352	St Eugene I	655
St Felix II, M. *	355	St Vitalian	657
St Damasus I	366	Deusdedit II	672
St Siricius	384	Donus I	676
St Anastasius I	399	St Agatho	678
St Innocent I	402	St Leo II	682
St Zozimus	417	St Benedict II	684
St Boniface I	418	John V	685
St Celestine I	423	Conon	686
St Sixtus III	432	St Sergius I	687
St Leo I (the Great) ...	440	John VI	701
St Hilary	461	John VII	705
St Simplicius	468	Sisinnius	708
St Felix III	483	Constantine	708
St Gelasius I	492	St Gregory II	715
St Anastasius II... ...	496	St Gregory III	731
St Symmachus	498	St Zachary	741
St Hormisdas	514	Stephen III †	752
St John I, M.	523	St Paul I	757
St Felix IV	526	Stephen IV	768
Boniface II	530	Adrian I	771
John II	532	St Leo III...	795
Agapitus	535	Stephen V	816
St Silverius, M.	536	St Paschal I	817
Vigilius	538	Eugene II	824
Pelagius I	555	Valentine	827
John III	560	Gregory IV	827
Benedict I	574	Sergius II	844
Pelagius II	578	St Leo IV...	847
St Gregory I (the Great)	590	Benedict III	855
Sabinian	604	St Nicholas I (the Great)	858

* Pope during exile of Liberius. † Stephen II (752) died before consecration.

	A.D		A.D.
Adrian II	867	John XIX...	1024
John VIII...	872	Benedict IX	1033
Marinus I...	882	Gregory VI	1044
Adrian III	884	Clement II	1046
Stephen VI	885	Damasus II	1048
Formosus...	891	St Leo IX ‡	1049
Boniface VI	896	Victor II	1055
Stephen VII	896	Stephen X	1057
Romanus	897	Nicholas II	1059
Theodore II	898	Alexander II	1061
John IX	898	St Gregory VII	1073
Benedic IV	900	B. Victor III	1087
Leo V	903	B. Urban II	1088
Christopher	903	Paschal II	1099
Sergius III	904	Gelasius II	1118
Anastasius III	911	Callistus II	1119
Landus	913	Honorius II	1124
John X	915	Innocent II	1130
Leo VI	928	Celestine II	1143
Stephen VIII	929	Lucius II	1144
John XI	931	B. Eugene III	1145
Leo VII	936	Anastasius IV	1153
Stephen IX	939	Adrian IV (Eng.) ...	1154
Marinus II *	943	Alexander III	1159
Agapitus II	946	Lucius III	1181
John XII	959	Urban III	1185
Benedict V	964	Gregory VIII	1187
John XIII...	965	Clement III	1187
Benedict VI	972	Celestine III	1191
Donus II	973	Innocent III	1198
Benedict VII	975	Honorius III	1216
John XIV...	984	Gregory IX	1227
John XV	985	Celestine IV	1241
Gregory V	996	Innocent IV	1243
Sylvester II	999	Alexander IV	1254
John XVII †	1003	Urban IV...	1261
John XVIII	1003	Clement IV	1265
Sergius IV	1009	B. Gregory X	1271
Benedict VIII	1012	Innocent V	1276

* Marinus I., II., were also called (Martinus) Martin II., III.
† John XVI (997) was an antipope. ‡ Leo VIII (963), antipope.

	A.D.		A.D.
Adrian V	1276	Julius III	1550
John XX *	1276	Marcellus II	1555
Nicholas III	1277	Paul IV	1555
Martin IV †	1281	Pius IV	1559
Honorius IV	1285	St Pius V	1566
Nicholas IV	1288	Gregory XIII	1572
St Celestine V	1294	Sixtus V	1585
Boniface VIII ‡	1294	Urban VII	1590
B. Benedict XI § ...	1303	Gregory XIV	1590
Clement V	1305	Innocent IX	1591
John XXII	1316	Clement VIII	1592
Benedict XII	1334	Leo XI	1605
Clement VI	1342	Paul V	1605
Innocent VI	1352	Gregory XV	1621
B. Urban V	1362	Urban VIII	1623
Gregory XI	1370	Innocent X	1644
Urban VI	1378	Alexander VII	1655
Boniface IX	1389	Clement IX	1667
Innocent VII	1404	Clement X	1670
Gregory XII	1406	Innocent XI	1676
Alexander V	1409	Alexander VIII	1689
John XXIII	1410	Innocent XII	1691
Martin V	1417	Clement XI	1700
Eugene IV	1431	Innocent XIII	1721
Nicholas V	1447	Benedict XIII	1724
Callistus III	1455	Clement XII	1730
Pius II	1458	Benedict XIV	1740
Paul II	1464	Clement XIII	1758
Sixtus IV	1471	Clement XIV	1769
Innocent VIII	1484	Pius VI	1775
Alexander VI	1492	Pius VII	1800
Pius III	1503	Leo XII	1823
Julius II	1503	Pius VIII	1829
Leo X	1513	Gregory XVI	1831
Adrian VI	1522	Pius IX	1846
Clement VII	1523	Leo XIII	1878
Paul III	1534	Pius X	1903

Once admit that the list just given proves our succession, the succession, that is, of the actual Bishop of Rome, whom

* Commonly called John XXI.

† Marinus I, II, were also called (Martinus) Martin II, III.

‡ Boniface VII (974), antipope. § Benedict X (1058), antipope.

we choose to call our "pope," or father, from St Peter, Rome's first bishop, and it is our title deed to apostolicity. It shows us to be the "one, holy, Catholic, apostolic Church." As that Church is only one, to use Cardinal Newman's expressive word, it "pulverizes" every other claim, for wherever the Church is it is but one.

3. The apostolicity of doctrine follows from the apostolicity of a ministry guided by the Holy Ghost. The apostolic Church, which is heir to the promises of Christ, cannot deviate from the truth of Christ or from the ways of Christ. Members may fall from truth, the Church may not without falsifying the word of God and the inheritance of the Christian name. "The Church spread over the earth to the ends of the world has received this faith from the apostles and their disciples."[1] The disciples transmitted the sacred deposit to *their* disciples, and so, through the ages, it has been an heirloom in the Church, an entailed inheritance which could not, without "making God a liar," pass from this, His one only Church, to another. It would be impossible for us, in the limited number of pages of a book like this, to attempt to trace all the doctrines of the Catholic Church through the vista of centuries to apostolic days. It could be done did space allow, and has been done by others. Explicitly or implicitly every dogma of the Christian faith to-day has come down to us from the upper chamber, from Calvary, from Jerusalem, from Bethlehem. In succeeding chapters we shall follow some of the articles of our creed even to their source; it would be both interesting and instructive to follow all in the same manner through these nineteen hundred years to the beginning of Christian times. It is, however, hardly necessary. The Church is apostolic, then must her teaching be apostolic. She is "the pillar and ground of truth," her doctrine, therefore, cannot vary. She is "the Church of the living God," God living within her; consequently she

[1] *St Irenæus adv. Hæres.* lib. I, cap. x, n. 1.

cannot speak any but words of truth, and truth is one unchanging and unchangeable, like Jesus Christ the "Truth," "yesterday, to-day, and the same for ever," as in apostolic days, so in these days, so to the end of time, one and immutable for ever. "This is My covenant with them, saith the Lord: My spirit that is in thee and My words which I have put in thy mouth shall not depart out of thy mouth nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever."[1]

4. The apostolic Church can only be one; consequently no other Church but the one can be apostolic. This is an *a priori* argument against apostolicity outside the Catholic Church, provided the note or mark is found in the Catholic Church. The *a posteriori* argument is no less, but probably more convincing. The origin of every other Church can be traced, as we have already said when speaking of the note of Catholicity, and in every instance it is traced to a century removed, generally by many centuries, from the century of the apostles. Arianism began as a sect in the fourth; Nestorianism in the following century; Eutychianism in the fifth, Manicheism having already sprung up, in the third; Calvinism, Lutheranism and the Anglican Established Church all in the prolific sixteenth century; the endless and countless sects from these sects in later ages still, some having been born this very year, some, may be, this very day. If this is not true, "let the heretics" accept Tertullian's challenge and "feign anything like" a genealogical tree, whose root is in apostolic days. If they claim the inheritance of apostolicity, where are their title deeds to prove the claim? Can the Anglican Church evidently, clearly and satisfactorily to men of mind trace their orders beyond Barlow? Can they prove that he was ordained? If not, *Nemo dat quod non habet*, he could not give to another that which he did not himself possess.

[1] Isa. lix, 21.

Can they show, that even supposing, though we do not grant it, that Matthew Parker was properly consecrated, his successors, many of whom did not believe in orders, did not pretend to their necessity and had not the remotest intention of doing more than appoint "preachers of the word," validly passed on the power, if they had it, to others? One link in the chain broken, the connexion has gone, and apostolic succession is less than a myth. How many links have been broken? Have there been links at all? For a Catholic the question of Anglican orders is settled by the letter of Pope Leo XIII deciding, after prolonged and most careful investigation, and after taking the evidence of all parties concerned—Anglican as well as Catholic—that they are *absolutely invalid*, *worthless* and *valueless*, and that, as a consequence, there is no sequence in their hierarchy beyond the sixteenth century, and that, therefore, the note of apostolicity is clearly wanting in their Church.[1] Even non-Catholics, for the most part, admit that the orders, if they exist, are extremely doubtful; some Protestants do not believe in their necessity; others do not believe in their existence at all.[2] How many are there, alas, living in this terrible doubt, clinging to an oar in the ocean when they know that there is a ship, that is certainly secure, within easy reach! Orders, however, are not in themselves a sufficient criterion of apostolicity, even if the orders were

* *Apostolicæ Curæ* of Leo XIII.

† The question of succession, or absence of succession of Anglican orders for non-Catholics is purely an historical one, which does not come within the scope of a book on "The Catholic Creed." Readers interested in the subject will find abundant matter in *A Vindication of the Bull Apostolicæ Curæ*, by the Cardinal Archbishop and Bishops of the Province of Westminster; *The Question of Anglican Ordinations*, by Canon Estcourt; *The Anglican Ministry*, by A. W. Hutton; *Tekel*, by the late Rev. Luke Rivington; *The Pope and the Ordinal*, by the Rev. A. Stapleton Barnes; Cardinal Newman's *Essays, Critical and Historical*, vol. II; and several of the Catholic Truth Society's publications. See also pages 169 and 239.

valid; more is needed—*mission*. "How can they preach unless they be sent?" If they preach and pretend to act in the name of Christ, will it not be said to them as the evil spirit said to the seven sons of Sceva, the Jew: "Jesus I know and Paul I know, but who are you?"[1] And when they teach, where is the apostolic doctrine—the anointing of the sick ordered by St James in his Epistle (v, 14)? the doctrines of penance and fasting practised and preached by St Paul (Acts xiii, 2)? the practice of virginity recommended by him in 1 Cor. vii? the doctrine of the "Body of the Lord" of which he speaks to the Corinthians (1 Cor. x) and the rest?

6. Once more we repeat, the Church is only one; one only, therefore, can be apostolic; one only can be the Church of Christ and the apostles. This Church is, so we Catholics firmly believe, "the one, holy, Catholic, apostolic Church," subject as to its visible head, to the Bishop of Rome. She has lived through the ages, she lives to-day, she must live to the end of time. "What an awful vitality is here! What a heavenly sustained sovereignty! What a self-evident divinity! She claims, she seeks, she desires no temporal power, no secular station. She meddles not with Cæsar or the things of Cæsar; she obeys him in his place, but she is independent of him. Her strength is in her God; her rule is over the souls of men; her glory is in her willing subjection and loving loyalty. She hopes and fears nothing from the world; it made her not, nor can it destroy her. She can benefit largely by it, but she does not force herself upon it. She may be persecuted by it, but she thrives under the persecution. She may be ignored, she may be silenced and thrown into a corner, but she is thought of the more. Calumniate her, and her influence grows; ridicule her, she does but smile upon you more awfully and persuasively. What will you do with her, ye sons of men, if you will not love her, if, at least, you will not

[1] Acts xix, 15.

suffer her? Let the last three hundred years reply. Let her alone, refrain from her; for if her counsel or her work be of men it will come to nought; but if it be of God you cannot overthrow it, lest perhaps you be found even to fight against God."[1]

[1] Cardinal Newman's *Sermons on Various Occasions*, ix. "Christ upon the Waters."

CHAPTER XVI

THE POPE THE VISIBLE HEAD OF THE CHURCH[1]

THE visible head of the Church on earth is the pope, whom Catholics regard as the vicar, vice-gerent, or representative of the invisible Head in heaven, who is Christ Jesus our Lord. The position and authority which we attribute to the pope does not in any way detract from the supreme allegiance which we owe and acknowledge to Jesus Christ, any more than the reverence and obedience given to the Viceroy of India, or the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, derogate from the reverence and obedience due to the Sovereign of England. In the one case and in the other the obedience, allegiance and respect are given vicariously through the vice-gerent or representative to the supreme Sovereign whose authority he wields, whose power he holds, whose person he represents, whose laws he interprets, whose will he manifests and upholds. He is

[1] The number of popes from St Peter to Pius X inclusively, without counting the antipopes, is commonly said to be 259 (see page 117). Of this number 82 are venerated as saints, 33 were martyred; 104 have been Romans, and 104 natives of other parts of Italy; 15 Frenchmen; 9 Greeks; 7 Germans; 5 Asiatics; 3 Africans; 3 Spaniards; 2 Dalmatians; 1 Hebrew; 1 Thracian; 1 Dutchman; 1 Portuguese; 1 Candiot; and one Englishman. Nine pontiffs have reigned less than 1 month, 30 less than 1 year, and 11 more than 20 years. Only 7 have occupied the pontifical chair over 23 years. These are St Peter, who was supreme pastor in Rome (besides the seven years of his pontificate in Antioch) 25 years, 2 months, 7 days; Sylvester I, 23 years, 10 months, 27 days; Adrian I, 23 years, 10 months, 14 days; Pius VI, 24 years, 6 months, 3 days; Pius VII, 23 years, 5 months, 6 days; Pius IX, who celebrated his 30th year in the pontifical chair June 19, A.D. 1876, and reigned 31 years, 7 months, 21 days; and our late Holy Father Leo XIII, who ascended the pontifical throne March 3, 1878, having been elected pope on the 20th of the preceding month, and who died July 20, 1903, having reigned 24 years and 4 months.

only a vicar; the Sovereign whom he represents is in all things supreme. He is only a vice-gerent, and cannot go beyond his commission. He is always and everywhere a representative, to do the bidding of the one whom he represents. When the supreme Head of the Church "walked this earth and was seen by men," He needed no visible vicar; but when He withdrew His visible presence, because it was expedient for us that He should go, then He named one who was to act visibly in His stead. In a visible body there must be a visible head; over a visible organization there must be a visible chief. If a kingdom has colonies dependent upon its king, the king appoints vice-gerents or viceroys to rule, to act in his stead, in the far-off lands; else if there is no visible head there will be no discipline, no order, no stability, no loyalty to the king. A crowd without a leader is nothing better than a mob. Every corporate body must have a visible authority if it is to remain a united body. In a kingdom there must be a king or a queen; in a colony a vice-king or vice-queen; in a republic, a president; in a place of business, a master; in an army, a general; in the navy, an admiral; on board a ship, a captain; in a society, a head; in an assembly, a chairman. Even socialists and anarchists, who rave against all authority, have their head-centre or chief. So in a church; if it is to be and is to remain a visible, acting, united organization, it must have one supreme visible, acting, governing head. A national church must have a head in each nation if it is to remain a united national church. A church which claims to be Catholic, or universal, i.e., to exist at all times and in all parts of the world, must have a visible head coming down in direct succession through all times, and acknowledged as supreme by the members of the Church in all lands. This is the position claimed for the pope by members of the Catholic Church. The Church is called "Catholic" because it has existed in all times, and actually exists in all places; it is called "Roman Catholic" be-

cause it has at all times acknowledged, and it acknowledges to-day, the supreme authority of the Bishop of Rome. It is a tree, with its roots in Rome and its branches in the entire world. It is a river, whose source is Rome, from which common source tributaries flow into all lands. It is a Catholic kingdom, its king residing in Rome. Catholics everywhere make the same profession: "I acknowledge the Holy, Catholic, Apostolic, Roman Church for the mother and mistress of all churches, and I promise true obedience to the Bishop of Rome, the successor of St Peter, prince of the apostles and vicar of Jesus Christ." [1]

Savonarola puts the argument in favour of the papacy very clearly in his "Triumph of the Cross." [2] After stating that he is now going to "argue against heretics who, though they admit Christ's gospel, yet have they fallen into different errors about it," and that "it being impossible to discuss every dogma which they dispute," he proposes with one blow (*uno ictu*) "to strike at all their errors," he goes on:

"First, therefore, we will prove that it is necessary for the entire Church (*universam ecclesiam*) to be governed by one head. If heretics admit that the Church is guarded by divine Providence they must also acknowledge that it has the best and wisest government. The best government for a multitude is that one should rule all, so that peace and unity may prevail. . . . In the Church triumphant in heaven God is the sole Ruler, so in the Church militant should there be one head. . . . So in Osee i, 11, we read: 'And the children of Juda and the children of Israel shall be gathered together, and they shall appoint themselves *one head*;' and in the gospel of St John:[3] 'There shall be one fold and one Shepherd.' Now we cannot say that our Lord was Head of the Church in such a way that after His ascension into heaven it was

[1] *Creed of Pope Pius IV.* [2] Book IV, vi. [3] John x, 16.

to have no visible head whatever, for in this case the Church would be left a prey to divisions and all sorts of confusion and disorder.[1] Opposite opinions, disputes, difficulties and doubts can only be settled by a judge who is well known to all. Therefore, our Lord said to Peter, 'Feed My sheep,' and again, 'I have prayed for thee, Peter, that thy faith may never fail, and do thou in thy turn confirm thy brethren.' Here we see clearly that our Lord made St Peter His vicar on earth, and we see it still more clearly in those other words, 'Thou art Peter (the rock), and on this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall never prevail against it,' and 'To thee will I give the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be likewise bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.' Now surely we cannot say that this supreme authority was only given to St Peter and not to his *successors*, for our Lord said that His Church was to last to the end of time: 'Behold I am with you all days, to the end of the world.' And this is what Isaias meant when, speaking of the Son of God, he said: 'He shall sit upon the throne of David and upon his kingdom, to strengthen it and confirm it for ever in judgement and justice.' Now, since the Bishops of Rome are the successors of St Peter, it follows that the Church of Rome is the mistress and head of all churches, and all true Christians must be united to the Roman pontiff, like members to their head; and, moreover, all those who separate from the unity and teaching of the Roman Church separate themselves from Jesus Christ."

The reasoning of the great Florentine Dominican is surely convincing. Even Luther, when he sent his propositions and their defence to Rome, wrote to Leo X in the letter accompanying them: "Most holy father, I cast

[1] Witness the dissensions in the Anglican Established Church, which did not exist when these words were written.

myself at thy feet with all that I am and have. . . . Thy voice is that of Christ, who speaks and presides in thee." And Henry VIII acknowledged the authority of the pope by submitting to him his book in defence of the seven sacraments written against Luther, and by gladly receiving in return from the same Leo X and his cardinals in the year 1521, for himself and his successors, the kings of England, the title of "Fidei Defensor," or "Defender of the Faith," an inscription which is still found upon our English coins—a lasting testimony that in the olden days England reasoned, as Savonarola reasoned, and believed as he believed, in the supremacy of the Bishop of Rome over Catholic Christendom. The English Church, the English king and the English people acknowledged him to be, in the words of the Council of Ephesus, "the father and patriarch of the whole world."

The Catholic Creed claims for the papacy three prerogatives—(1) *primacy*, or pre-eminence; (2) *supremacy*, or supreme authority; (3) *infallibility*, or immunity from error in what are called *ex cathedra* definitions.

1. The Primacy of the Pope[1]

ST PETER was the first among the apostles, the first in place, in honour, in rank; he took precedence of all. His successor, the Bishop of Rome, inherits with St Peter's see St

[1] Primacy implies pre-eminence. A primate is one by right occupying the first place. We may distinguish four kinds of primacy: (1) of *honour*, i.e., of rank or position; (2) of *authority*, giving the right to command; (3) of *power* or *order*, implying the inherent ability of doing what no other can do, in the instance of the papacy this is understood to be the power of "the keys"; (4) of *jurisdiction*, giving the right, i.e., to enforce authority by pains and penalties, and not merely by influence or persuasion.

The Catholic Creed, as will be seen, claims for the Sovereign Pontiff not only precedence, or primacy of place and honour, but also—in ecclesiastical matters—supremacy of authority, power and jurisdiction over the entire Church, with its bishops, priests and laity, throughout the world.

Peter's distinction, his primacy of place and position. He is "the sovereign pontiff," i.e., the chief amongst the pontiffs or bishops, the supreme shepherd of the fold of Christ. As St Peter Chrysologus wrote, more than 1,500 years ago, in reference to the pope of that time: "Blessed Peter lives and presides in his own see, and gives the true faith to those who seek it."[2]

(*a*) To say that St Peter was first among the apostles is only to repeat the words of holy scripture. St Matthew says: "And the names of the twelve apostles are these: *the first*, Simon, who is called Peter" (x, 2). In the lists given by the other sacred writers the name of Peter invariably comes first. Thus St Mark writes: "And He made that twelve should be with Him, and that He might send them to preach. And to Simon He gave the name of Peter," the other names follow (iii, 14). St Luke again: "He chose twelve of them (whom also He named apostles), Simon whom He surnamed Peter, and Andrew," etc. (vi, 13, 14). In the Acts of the Apostles: "They went into an upper room where abode Peter and John," etc. (i, 13).

(*b*) In our Lord's lifetime to St Peter is given, even by our Lord Himself, primacy, or precedence, of the rest. Jesus preaches from Peter's boat, "going into one of the ships that was Simon's . . . . sitting He taught the multitudes out of the ship" (Luke v). He singles Peter out and tells him to "launch out into the deep," and when he has caught the "the very great multitude of fishes" He says to Peter: "Fear not; from henceforth *thou* shalt catch men" (Luke v). He visits Peter's house, and cures his wife's mother of a fever (Matt. viii). To Peter—and to Peter alone—He gives another name significative of his future mission: "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church" (Matt. xvi). For Peter—and for

[2]Letter to Eutyches.

Peter alone, or for him especially—He prays: "Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath desired to have you (i.e., the apostles) . . . . but I have prayed for *thee* that *thy* faith fail not, and *thou*, being once converted, confirm *thy* brethren" (Luke xxii). When He is transfigured He "takes Peter and James and John into the high mountain apart" (Matt. xvii). When He prepares to die, He sends Peter and John to get ready for the pasch (Luke xxii). He washes the feet of His disciples, and He begins with Peter (John xiii). He goes to the garden of His agony, leaving His disciples at a distance, and "taking with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee" (Matt. xxvi). After His resurrection, notwithstanding Peter's denial, we are told "the Lord hath risen, and hath appeared to Simon" (Mark xvi). As St Paul puts it: "He was seen by Cephas and *after that* by the eleven" (1 Cor. xv). And even when "He manifested Himself a third time to His disciples after He was was risen from the dead," He appeals to Peter," "Simon, son of John, lovest thou Me?" and then commits to him the care of the flock (John xxi). It is always Peter; and everywhere Peter is the first.

(*c*) Little wonder if, after this predilection of our Blessed Lord, we find Peter taking the first place, and speaking and acting in the name, and as the representative, of the apostles. Jesus asks them all at Capharnaum: "Whom do men say that I am?" then: "Whom do you say that I am?" Simon Peter answered, and said: "Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matt. xvi). Our Lord speaks a parable, and the apostles wonder what can be its meaning and whether it refers to them; then Peter said to Him: "Lord, dost Thou speak this parable to us or likewise to all?" (Luke xii.) The apostles are tossed about in a boat at sea; our Lord appears to them, and bids them be of good heart. It is Peter who answers: "Lord, if it be Thou, bid me come to Thee upon the waters," and it is Peter who walks upon the sea (Matt. xiv). Our Lord ex-

plains the mystery of the Blessed Sacrament at Capharnaum; many are scandalized, and go away. Our Lord turns to the apostles, and says: "Will you also go away?" It is Peter who replies for the rest: "Lord, to whom shall we go, for Thou hast the words of eternal life?" (John vi.) On one occasion St Peter seems almost, in his excess of zeal, to have presumed upon his primacy; for when our Lord spoke of His Passion "Peter, taking Him, began to rebuke Him," protesting that it should not come to pass, and the Master had to chide His first disciple, and say: "Get behind Me, Satan, ... thou savourest not the things that are of God but the things that are of men" (Matt. xvi). It is Peter again who asks: "Lord, how often shall I forgive my brother?" (Matt. xviii.) And it is he who reminds our Lord, in the name of all, "Lord, we have left all things to follow Thee" (Matt. xix). When our Lord cursed the fig-tree, Peter drew His attention to the fact of its being withered and dead (Mark xi). When the Master goes out, Peter asks, "Whither goest Thou?" (John xiii.) On the day of betrayal, Peter cuts off the ear of Malchus in his zeal (John xviii).

(*d*) It is after the resurrection that St Peter, by virtue of his primacy, fills the place of the Master, and acts and speaks in His stead. John holds back, that Peter may first enter the sepulchre, Magdalene having reported to Peter that the body of our Lord had disappeared (John xx). The election of Matthias to take the place of Judas is held; Peter presides at it, and explains the reason and the mode of the choice (Acts i). He speaks for the other apostles to the people, and explains our Lord's life and death and the mystery of redemption, "Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice" (Acts ii). He works the miracle upon the lame man at the beautiful gate of the temple (Acts iii). He opens the door of the Church to the Gentiles by the baptism of Cornelius the Centurion (Acts x). He is the first to speak, at the first council of

the Church which was held in the historic city of Jerusalem, and the other apostles agree with his decision (Acts xv). In a word, if anything is clear in holy writ, surely it is the primacy of St Peter—the pre-eminence given to him by our Lord, accepted and exercised by him, and admitted by his co-apostles. Always and everywhere Peter is first.

2. As Savonarola argues so well, the primacy was not given to St Peter personally but officially, it was to descend to his successors in the Church, which was to exist to the end of time. Had it been a personal gift, would not our Lord have given it to St John, "the disciple whom He loved," or to the second of the "sons of thunder," or to any of the others who had not denied Him? No, it was given to Peter, and was to go from him to his successors, to those who inherited his see. And who are they? St Optatus tells us: "You cannot deny" (he is addressing the Donatists) "that you know that in the city of Rome the episcopal chair was bestowed on Peter first, in which Peter, head of all the apostles, sat, in which one chair unity was to be preserved, that the rest of the apostles might not maintain each his own chair, that he might be at once a schismatic and a sinner who against the chair which stands alone (*singularem*) sets another."[1] After which he enumerates the primates, i.e., the Bishops of Rome, down to the pope of his own day, Liricius (A.D. 385). The heretics," he says, "have not the keys which Peter alone received." In one of the five "Poems against Marcion," by some attributed to Tertullian, by others to Victorinus, who was martyred A.D. 303, and of which the learned authors of "Roma Sotteranea"[2] say that it clearly belongs to the third century, we have these words:

> The first
> Whom Peter bade to take his place and sit
> Upon this chair in mightiest Rome, where he
> Himself had sat, was Linus, great, elect
> And by the mass approved. And after him
> Cletus himself the fold's flock undertook;

[1] Lib. II, ii, iii. [2] Vol. I, p. 40, edit. 1879.

As his disciple Anacletus was
By lot located; Clement follows him;
Well known was he to apostolic men.

. . . . . .

Blooming in piety,
United stood the Church of Rome, compact
By Peter; whose successor too himself,
And now to the ninth place, Hyginus was
The burden undertaking of his chair. [1]

We have earlier evidence still. Even in the lifetime of St John the Evangelist, the "disciple whom Jesus loved," Pope St Clement (the third from Peter) is appealed to by the Christians of Corinth, and he writes to them: "We have sent faithful and discreet men . . . . who shall be witnesses between us and you." . . . "You will cause us much joy and exultation if, *obeying* the things written by us through the Holy Spirit, you cut out the lawless passion of your jealousy, according to the intercession for peace and concord in this letter." [2] St Irenæus, too, speaks of "the higher rank and power" of the Roman Church, and says: "With this Church every other church must agree, that is all the faithful, whoever they are, must agree with her, because in her the tradition of the apostles is ever preserved." [3] St Irenæus, be it remembered, wrote in the second century. Surely *then* they must have had "the mind of Christ." A testimony like this, coming from that early date, must carry much more weight than all the denials of so-called learned men in the sixteenth or even the twentieth century. St Cyprian, St Jerome, St Ambrose, all bear witness to the pre-eminence, or primacy, of the Bishop of Rome over the other bishops in the world. In the east the councils both of Chalcedon and Ephesus recognized the primacy of the Roman See, and only claimed second place for the Patriarch of Constantinople. Cardinal Newman summarizes the result of a life-study of the question in these words: "The visible headship of the Church, which was with St Peter whilst he lived, has been lodged

[1] *Carm. adv. Marcion*, Lib. III, viii. Ed. Migne.
[2] 1 *Ep. ad Corinth.* [3] *Adv. Haeres.* III, iii, n. 2.

ever since in his chair; that continuous line of Bishops of Rome, or popes, as they are called, one after another, as years have rolled on, one dying and another coming, down to this day, when we see [the pope] sustaining the weight of the apostolate . . . . a tremendous weight, a ministry involving momentous duties, innumerable anxieties and immense responsibilities, as it has ever done . . . . like St Peter he is the Vicar of Christ."[1] The Bishop of Rome has ever, through the ages, been recognized as the first bishop of Christendom, the sovereign pontiff, the chief shepherd of the flock. That he is so is an article of our Catholic Creed. "For none can doubt," as the Fathers of the Vatican Council express it,[2] "and it is known to all ages, that the holy and blessed Peter, the prince and chief of the apostles . . . . lives and presides and judges, to this day and always, in his successors, the bishops of the holy see of Rome, which was founded by him and consecrated by his blood. If then any should deny that it is by the institution of Christ the Lord, or by divine right, that the blessed Peter should have a perpetual line of successors in the primacy over the universal Church, or that the Roman pontiff is the successor of blessed Peter in this primacy, let him be anathema."[3]

2. The Supremacy of the Pope

To primacy supremacy adds authority. Primacy implies precedence; supremacy involves, as well as authority, jurisdiction, power. Peter was not only "primus inter pares," the first amongst equals; he was the supreme shepherd; he had authority over the entire fold. There are three texts, three words of our Lord, which prove that St Peter, and consequently his successors to all time, received from the divine Founder of the Church, not merely primacy of place, but supremacy in power and authority over the other apostles.

[1] *Occasional Sermons*, p. 263.

[2] *Constit. Dogmat. de Eccles.*, cap. ii.

[3] The reader who wishes to pursue this important subject is referred to *The Roman Primacy*, by the late Rev. Dr Rivington.

The latest or Vatican Council expresses the Church's teaching upon this point clearly: "If any shall say that the Roman pontiff has the office merely of inspection and direction, and not the full power of jurisdiction over the universal Church, not only in things which relate to faith or morals, but also in those which belong to the discipline and government of the Church spread throughout the world . . . . or that this power which he enjoys is not ordinary and immediate, both over each and all the churches, and over each and all the pastors and the faithful, let him be anathema."[1]

1. The first of the three texts referred to is the well-known one from the 16th chapter of St Matthew's Gospel. The apostle had just given testimony to our Lord's divinity: "Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God"; and our Lord thereupon makes this promise: "Thou art Peter [the word Peter meaning a rock], and upon this rock [upon thee] I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth, it shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose upon earth, it shall be loosed also in heaven." Jesus Christ promises perpetuity and indefectibility to His Church, because it is to be built on a rock, the rock being Peter. He promises supernatural power to His Church, for in scripture language "keys" are the symbol of power; but the power is to reside with Peter. He promises jurisdiction, the authority to bind and loose, but He only promises it through Peter. The words are addressed to Peter, and to Peter alone: "Thou art Peter." "Upon *thee* will I build My Church." "To *thee* will I give the keys." "Whatsoever *thou* shalt bind or loose." Clearly, if words mean anything, these words mean that Peter is more than the rest of the apostles; he is their chief, their head, their ruler, their king.

2. To make the case quite evident, and to remove the shadow of any doubt, the divine Founder of the Church on

[1] *Constit. Dogmat. de Eccles.*, cap. iii.

another occasion spoke other—perhaps even stronger, certainly clearer—words: "Behold, Satan hath desired to have you [He addresses the apostles in the plural] that he may sift you as wheat." But it shall not be. Why? "I have prayed for *thee* [Simon] that thy faith fail not; and thou being once converted [our Lord foresaw his fall and his conversion] confirm thy brethren."[1] The Church is not to fail, the apostles are not to be "sifted as wheat," Satan is not to have them. Why? Because Jesus Christ has singled out Peter and prayed for him; *his* faith is not to fail, and *he* is to "confirm," strengthen, govern, rule and direct his "brethren," the rest of the apostles, the other bishops of the Church.

3. Yet once more our divine Master makes known His will and points to Peter as the governor of his brethren, the chief shepherd of the fold. It is after the resurrection, and our Lord appears to all; but now He gives power; He no longer promises, but actually bestows jurisdiction over the entire fold. After three times asking Peter if he loved Him, and after Peter had three times strongly protested his love, the divine Shepherd says to His vicar shepherd: "Feed My lambs. . . . Feed My lambs. . . . Feed My sheep."[2] The prophet had foretold of our Lord: "He shall feed His flock like a shepherd,"[3] and now He entrusts this work to Peter, when He shall have gone away; not to the others, but to Peter; or if to the others, only through Peter, who is to be the chief shepherd. As by "the keys" our Lord gave authority to rule, so by the commission to "feed" the sheep and lambs, He gave him authority to teach. We have again the fulfilment of prophecy, of a double prophecy: "And I will set up one shepherd over them; and he shall feed them, even my servant David; he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd. And I the Lord will be their God; my servant David the prince in the midst of them."[4] Peter is the visible

[1] Luke xxii, 32. [2] John xxi, 15, 17. [3] Isa. xl, 11.
[4] Ezec. xxxiv, 23, 24.

shepherd; and the Lord, the invisible shepherd, is still their God. And the food; what was that to be? "And I will give you pastors according to My own heart, and they shall feed you with knowledge and doctrine."[1] The definition of the Council of Florence (A.D. 1439) reads like a paraphrase of, or a commentary on these three words of Jesus Christ: "We define that the Roman pontiff is the successor of the blessed Peter, prince of the apostles and true vicar of Jesus Christ, the Head of the whole Church, the Father and Teacher of all Christians; and we declare that to him, in the person of blessed Peter, was given by Jesus Christ our Lord full power to feed, to rule, and to govern the universal Church."

4. As a matter of history, the pope, or Bishop of Rome, has ever exercised this supremacy of authority and jurisdiction, not only over the people of Rome but over the people, the priests, and the bishops of the world. Peter's authority was exercised in Jerusalem. Before he spoke "there was much disputing," after he had spoken "all the multitude held their peace," and a decree was formed settling the disputed point, "It hath seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us."[2] So has it ever been. The dictum of St Augustine: "Roma locuta est, causa finita est—now that Rome has spoken, the matter is settled"[3] has become an axiom in Christian polemics, even as has the saying of St Ambrose: "Ubi Petrus ibi Ecclesia—where Peter is, there is the Church." Here and there it is true an individual or individuals have risen up to call it in question, but in the history of the Church they have been

Rari nantes in gurgite vasto.

Truly they have only been a few, swimming here and there, in the vast abyss of 1900 years. A Luther here, a Calvin

[1] Jer. iii, 15. [2] Acts xv.

[3] The exact words of St Augustine are these: "Upon this point [*causa*] already two councils [i.e., those of Carthage and Milevum] have been sent to the Apostolic See; rescripts have been received in return. The question is at an end. May the error also be soon ended." Serm. cxxxi, n. 10. (Edit. Paris, 1837, vol. V, p. 930.)

there, a Henry the Eighth yonder. Until the sixteenth century there was only one Christianity, the Christianity whose heart and centre was Rome. There were two camps, the camp of Baal and the camp of the Lord. But the camp of the Lord was one. One Christ, one Christianity, one visible head of the Christian Church. The supremacy of the pope was an accepted and an acknowledged fact, beyond cavil and dispute. It entered into the very life of the Church, and had its influence even upon the political economy of the world. The "Ubi Petrus ibi Ecclesia" was only a later admission of the creed of the earlier ages, and it has been echoed in every succeeding age. The words of the Council of Ephesus (A.D. 431) is another version of it: "Peter lives, judges and defines in his successors." St Jerome's profession of faith, in his epistle to Pope Damasus, takes up the same refrain: "I am attached to your chair, which is that of St Peter; I know that the Church is built upon that rock." The words of the martyr, saint and pontiff, written to St Cyprian in the third century, is the profession of all ages: "There is only one God, one Christ, the Lord, and His Church one, one Holy Ghost, one bishop in the Catholic Church."[1]

5. The pope of Rome has been, in all times, the supreme arbiter and spiritual sovereign of Christendom. (*a*) All appeals have been made to him. The appeal of the Corinthians to St Clement in the days of the apostle St John, to whom we have referred; the appeal about the celebration of Easter in the end of the second and beginning of the third centuries; the appeal of St Athanasius against the decision of the eastern bishops; St John Chrysostom's appeal against the injustice of the empress, Eudoxia; the appeal even of Henry VIII of England against the validity of his marriage; the appeal of Luther against Tetzel, and so to our own days. (*b*) He has summoned, or approved of the summoning of, the general councils of the Church. Either personally or by proxy he has presided at their deliberations, and has confirmed their decisions

[1] Inter. Opp. S. Cypr. Ep. xlix, n. 2.

when formed. Even in the general councils held in the East, the papal authority was admitted, the councils being either convoked or sanctioned by the sovereign pontiff; and if they did not preside over all, by their legates, they at least confirmed their canonical laws and their theological definitions. Some of the strongest expressions of loyalty to Peter's see come to us from the fathers of the eastern councils. "Peter has spoken by Leo," "the prince and head of the apostles . . . even until now lives and judges in his successors," are the professions of the fathers of the councils of Chalcedon A.D. 451, and of Ephesus A.D. 431, respectively. When Pope Adrian's letter was read at the seventh general council, that being the second held at Nicæa A.D. 787, in which he said: "Peter's see shines forth in primacy over the whole Church, and is the head of all the churches in the world." . . . . adding that it "held everywhere and holds supreme authority, ... " and requiring Tarasius, the patriarch of Constantinople, to "adhere to our apostolic see which is the head of all the churches," we are told that the whole synod cried out in acclamation: "The holy synod so believes, is so convinced, and so defines."[1] (*c*) National or provincial councils again are, and have been, submitted to the apostolic see for confirmation before their "acta" or "canons" become law.

(*d*) Whenever heresies have sprung up in the Church, they have been condemned and anathematized by the holy see, or by councils summoned by the sovereign pontiff. The condemnation of Nestorianism at Ephesus, of Arianism at Nicæa, of Manichæism at the fourth Lateran council, of Protestantism in its various forms at Trent, evidences the supreme authority of the apostolic see claimed, admitted, and respected.

(*e*) Another proof of the admission of papal supremacy is the fact that the appointment of bishops to their respective sees has either been made directly, or confirmed by the apostolic see; and that archbishops have invariably

[1] Harduin, *Concilia*, tom. IV, p. 104.

received the *pallium* from Rome, as St Augustine received his from Pope St Gregory and the present archbishop of Westminster from Pope Pius X.

(*f*) If further evidence is needed, we have it in the historic fact that the different countries of the world have received the faith of Christ from missioners sent, directly or indirectly, from Rome. Pope St Gregory, as our own Venerable Bede tells us so pathetically, sent St Augustine to our English shores to unite our people to the Catholic Church. Pope Celestine sent St Patrick to Ireland. St Boniface, the apostle of Germany, received his mission and his consecration as bishop from Pope Gregory II. America, North and South, together with Australia and New Zealand, were all evangelized by bishops, priests, monks and friars, in communion with the mother Church of Rome.

All these historical evidences of power, precedence, authority, primacy supply a commentary, which "he who runs may read," on the words of our Lord to St Peter: "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church." The recognition of this divine truth is the only solution of what has been called the "religious problem." Joseph, the patriarch of Constantinople, was found dead at his table during the Council of Florence, a few days before the passing of the decree which we have already quoted. A paper was found on the table by his side, upon which he had just written in a straggling hand: "Joseph, by the mercy of God, archbishop of Constantinople, the new Rome, and œcumenical patriarch: being now at the end of my days, and about to pay the common debt of mankind, I wish by the grace of God to communicate, in open writ and over my own signature, my dying sentiments to all my spiritual children. 'Whatsoever the holy, Catholic and apostolic Church of ancient Rome believes and teaches, this do I believe and obey; and I do most solemnly confess that the pope of ancient Rome is the father of fathers, the

sovereign pontiff and vicar of our Lord Jesus Christ. . . . In witness thereof I hereunto set my signature, this 9th day of June, 1439, of the second indiction.'"[1] On July 5 of that same year, the Greeks signed the decree that "the bishop of Rome enjoys a primacy throughout the whole world . . . that he is the true vicar of Christ . . . . the head of the universal Church . . . . of all Christians the father and teacher." The Eastern and Western Churches were united under the one "head of the universal Church." A united church must submit to the ruling of one supreme head, else unity is a chimera, and union an impossibility.

[1] Alzog's *Universal History*, vol. III, p. 86.

3. The Infallibility of the Pope

To the two privileges of primacy and supremacy, which we Catholics claim—and we have ever justified the claim—for the sovereign pontiff as the vicar of Jesus Christ and head of the Church on earth, we add a third, that of infallibility. Primacy is the prerogative of the bishop of St Peter's see; supremacy the right of the ruler or head of the Church; infallibility the necessary gift of the supreme teacher. The bishop of St Peter's see, the ruler of the Catholic Church, the supreme teacher of Christendom, is the bishop of Rome, upon whose venerable brow rests this triple crown, placed there by Christ our Lord, and reverenced in all ages by the Christian Church.

We believe in the infallibility of the head of the Church, because he is the vicar of Christ, who is the very "truth," and because he is the mouth-piece of "the Church of the living God," which is "the pillar and ground of truth." The Church is infallible, because Christ our Lord is infallible; the pope is infallible because the Church is infallible. Where does infallibility reside, if not in the head? Can a body be infallible if the chief member of the body, the head, can be misled, and if the mouth-piece of the body can mislead? Infallibility follows from the primacy and the

supremacy; it is the outcome of the one and the other. When the primate and supreme ruler and teacher of the Church teaches the entire Church, as primate and supreme teacher, he must not err. The supreme teacher in an infallible church must be unerring in his doctrine. The members of an infallible church must have one upon whom they can with confidence depend for their guidance—a pillar of fire by night, a pillar of a cloud by day.

1. Many deny the possibility of infallibility because they do not know what it means. Let us see. And first let us see what it does *not* mean; what we do *not* believe; what is *not* an article of our Catholic Creed.

(*a*) Infallibility does not mean *impeccability*, i.e., that the pope cannot sin. It has nothing to do with sin at all. The mere fact of the pope having to go to confession, as has any simple humble child of the Church, proves at once that the Church does not claim for him impeccability. The pope is a man, and therefore can sin. The pope goes to confession, and therefore, presumably, does sin. From his exalted position, as supreme head of the Church on earth, he ought to aspire to sanctity of life; like the great high priest he ought to aim at being "innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners, made higher than the heavens."[1] As a rule, though there may have been exceptions, the lives of the sovereign pontiffs have been exemplary and irreproachable; many of them have been saints; few have been men of unholy life. But if a pope were not a man of blameless life, nay, if he were a man of scandalous life, this would not militate against what the Church understands by infallibility. Prove as many scandals as you like, through the long vista of nineteen centuries, in the unbroken line of the two hundred and fifty-nine popes—scandals against their personal characters —you prove absolutely nothing against infallibility, which is not a personal gift, but an official prerogative. The private

[1] Heb. vii, 26.

life of a judge has nothing to do with his official fitness; an unworthy man may be an excellent judge. The individual character is distinct from public and official capacity. Once realize that impeccability and infallibility are by no means convertible terms, that the one has absolutely nothing to do with the other, and you have an answer to many of the supposed difficulties against the Catholic claim of infallibility.

(b) Infallibility again does not mean *inspiration.* An infallible pontiff need not be inspired, as were the apostles and other sacred writers of the word of God. Infallibility implies, it is true, divine guidance, but not divine inspiration.

(c) Infallibility, in fine, does not claim that a pope cannot err in his private capacity, or as a theologian, or as a writer. We do not pretend that everything that the pope writes or says—even though he says it to the College of Cardinals or writes it in an encyclical letter—must be infallibly true. We are not bound to accept as articles of faith all that Benedict XIV, for instance, has written in his "De Synodo Diœcesana," although it was penned, in part at least, when he was pope. No. Infallibility has nothing to do with the personal sayings, or the personal writings, or the personal, though public, teaching of the man who is pope. Understand this well, and you have the key to the solution of some of the supposed errors, which are repeated *ad nauseam,* though repeatedly answered, into which two or three occupants of the Holy See are said to have fallen. They wrote, or spoke, or taught as individual bishops, priests, theologians, doctors, but not as popes teaching the entire Church in matters of morality or belief.

2. What then *does* infallibility mean? What do we claim for the pope when we say that he is infallible? We must learn from the Church what the Church teaches. If you look at a stained glass window—"The Five Sisters'" window in York Minster, for instance—from the outside it is

blotched and blurred and unsightly; if you look at it from within the cathedral when the sun is shining upon it, it is "a thing of beauty," a lesson, a poem, a sermon. So with Catholic truth. We must not look at it as seen from outside the Church, but as seen by those within. What do we see from within when we talk about the infallibility of the Bishop of Rome? The words of the Vatican Council which defined this doctrine, tell us clearly what we are bound to, and what we do believe. The following is a translation of this definition:

"Wherefore faithfully adhering to the tradition received from the beginning of the Christian faith, for the glory of God our Saviour, the exaltation of the Catholic religion, and the salvation of the Christian people, we, the Sacred Council approving, teach and define that it is a dogma divinely revealed: that the Roman pontiff, when he speaks *ex cathedra*, that is, when discharging the office of pastor and teacher of all Christians, by reason of his supreme apostolic authority, he defines a doctrine regarding faith or morals to be held by the whole Church—he, by the divine assistance promised to him in Blessed Peter, possesses that infallibility with which the divine Redeemer willed that His Church should be endowed in defining doctrine regarding faith or morals: and that therefore such definitions of the said Roman pontiff are of themselves unalterable and not from the consent of the Church."[1]

Infallibility then refers only to the *ex cathedra* definitions of the popes; decisions, i.e., given officially to the entire Church from the chair of Peter, from the pope as pope, in matters of faith or morals. Consequently: *(a)* the decision must be a matter coming under the jurisdiction of the pope, as the chief shepherd of the divine Shepherd; it must be upon a question, not of science, or history, or natural knowledge, except in so far as they bear upon morals or faith, but it must be a matter either of creed or morality

[1] Sess. iv, can. 4.

or both. . . . *(b)* It must be an *ex cathedra*, i.e., a solemn and official and authoritative pronouncement. *(c)* It must be addressed, not to a bishop or a diocese, or to a nation, or even to any portion of the Church, but to the entire Church of bishops, priests and people throughout the world.

When the pope thus speaks, as pope, to the Church, committed to his care by Jesus Christ, upon a subject pertaining to the deposit of truth or the code of morality, his decision is final and infallible. Against it there is no appeal, even to a general council. We must accept it as an article of our belief. We believe that God will not let his vicar err in defining such solemn truths. The divine Shepherd, who is "with [us] all days, even to the end of time," will not allow His chief shepherd to feed his sheep on the poisonous herbs and rank weeds of heresy and error. The invisible Head of the Church will not let "the gates of hell prevail against it." He will not let *him* err, whom He has solemnly appointed to "confirm" his brethren. He who "has loved us and has washed us from our sins in His own blood" will not abandon us in our hour of need. He who "loves His Church as His bride" will not allow her to be divorced from Him who is the eternal Truth. He whose Church was to be "without spot or wrinkle" will not allow her to be sullied by heresy or error. The Holy Ghost, who was to be "with" her, and to "abide" with her, will not abandon her to the wiles of the wicked one; He will not allow her faith to fail. Even Döllinger once wrote: "The chair of Peter was to be the stronghold of truth, a fortress of faith for all. For the words and prayers of our Lord had reference not only to one person and to the immediate future; they were meant to lay the foundations of an edifice, they were meant for the Church and her future needs."[1]

3. The patristic argument in favour of infallibility is too long for a book of modest dimensions, which has to treat of the entire Christian creed. We must refer our readers to

[1]Quoted by Schanz, *Christian Apology*, vol. III, p. 512.

others who have treated *ex professo*, and some exclusively, this point of Catholic belief. We can only sum up the argument in the words of the late Cardinal Manning: "The application of the promise, 'Ego rogavi pro te,' or 'I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not, etc.,' to the infallible faith of Peter and his successors is made by St Ambrose, St Augustine, St Leo, St Gelasius, Pelagius II, St Gregory the Great, Stephen Bishop of Dori, in a Lateran Council, St Vitatian, the bishops of the IVth œcumenical council, A.D. 481, St Agatho in the VIth A.D. 680, St Bernard A.D. 1153, St Thomas Aquinas A.D. 1274, St Bonaventure A.D. 1274; that is, this interpretation is given by three out of the four doctors of the Church, by six pontiffs down to the seventh century. It was recognized by two œcumenical councils. It is explicitly declared by the angelic doctor, who may be taken as the exponent of the Dominican school; and by the seraphic doctor, who is likewise the witness of the Franciscan; and by a multitude of saints. This catena, if continued to later times, might, as all know, be indefinitely prolonged."[1]

4. To a Catholic the infallibility of the pope, in the sense in which the Church teaches it, is no difficulty. The difficulty would be the other way, i.e., if he were *not* infallible. There would be a difficulty in reconciling with his fallibility the promises of our Lord to Peter, the possibility of the supreme Shepherd "feeding" His flock with sound and safe doctrine, the ever-abiding presence of Jesus Christ and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit guaranteed by our Lord Himself to His Church. Were

[1] *The Vatican Council and its Definitions*, pp. 80–84. If the reader will refer to this, and also to Cardinal Manning's *Religio Viatoris;* Allnatt's *Cathedra Petri;* Allies' *See of Peter;* Schanz's *Christian Apology*, vol. III; Cardinal Newman's *Reply to Gladstone's "Vaticanism";* the late Rev. Dr Rivington's several books on the Papacy; or the pamphlet on *Infallibility*, by the Rev. F. Vincent McNabb, O.P.; he will see with what truth the Vatican Council adheres "to the tradition received from the beginning of the Christian faith."

it not for infallibility, how could the Church be said to be "built upon a rock"? or that "the gates of hell" could not "prevail against it"? or that our Lord's infallible prayer had been answered when he prayed that Peter's faith should not fail?" How could the Church be fitly described as "the pillar and ground of truth," if it were swayed to and fro by every "crisis," and if it were at the mercy of every wind and every storm? How, without being infallibly sure himself, could Peter's successor "confirm" or strengthen the faith of his brethren? or how could those brethren know with certainty that they were following the true light and not being led astray by a fatuous light, a lurid Will o' the wisp?

The only logical interpretation of the words and promises of our Lord to Peter and to the Church which He founded is infallibility. Infallibility is a necessity; therefore did our Lord promise it. Our Lord promised infallibility to Peter; therefore is he infallible. The words of the Vatican Council, "We define that, when the Roman pontiff speaks *ex cathedra*, he possesses that infallibility with which the divine Redeemer willed that His Church should be endowed," is a natural and logical corollary to our Lord's words: "Thou art Peter, etc."; "Feed My lambs," etc.; "I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not, etc." This definition was not the promulgation of a new doctrine, invented in the nineteenth century, any more than the divinity of our Lord defined at Ephesus in the year 431 was an invention of the fifth century. No doctrine can be new. It was the dogmatic development of our divine Master's words, and of the consistent, if not always explicit, belief of the Church from the beginning. Infallibility gives to the spiritual order what sovereignty, or royal supremacy, gives to the temporal order. "Infallibility in the spiritual order of things, and sovereignty in the temporal order, are two words perfectly synonymous. The one and the other are due to that high power which

rules over all other powers, from which all derive their authority, which governs and is not governed, which judges and is not judged. When we say that the Church is infallible . . . . we only require that she possess the right common to all sovereignties, which all necessarily act as if infallible."[1]

St Bernard summarizes the Catholic position with regard to the papacy in the words which he addressed to his former disciple, when, under the title of Eugenius III, he was raised to the pontifical throne. "Who art thou?" he asks the newly elected pope. And he answers his own question: Thou art "the high priest, the supreme bishop. Thou art the prince of bishops, thou art the heir of the apostles. Thou art Abel in primacy, Noe in government, Abraham in the patriarchal rank, in order Melchisedech, in dignity Aaron, in authority Moses, Samuel in the judicial office, Peter in power, Christ in unction. Thou art he to whom the keys of heaven are given, to whom the sheep are entrusted . . . . to thee all are entrusted, one flock for the one. Not merely for the sheep, but for all the shepherds thou art the one shepherd."[2]

[1] De Maistre, *Du Pape*, I, i. [2] *De Consideratione*, II, viii.

CHAPTER XVII

THE ORGANIZATION OF THE CHURCH

1. THE Church is a corporate body of which the pope is the visible head. In a corporate body the head does not act alone; there is a hierarchy or organization of its members, each doing the work allotted to it, and yet all subject to the head. This is the economy which prevails in the Church. The Church is a vineyard;[1] but in the vineyard there are several, perhaps many, "dressers of the vine" all subject to the "Master of the vineyard." The Church is "a fold,"[2] in which, though there is only one chief shepherd, there are many shepherds subject to the chief. The Church is an army, we call it "the Church militant"; in this army there are many officers of different rank, but all are under the jurisdiction of the general or commander-in-chief. Our Lord chose twelve "whom He called apostles," who were to be with Him. He chose also "seventy-two" who were to "go before Him into every place and city whither He was about to go."[3] So in the Church is there a hierarchy of ministers, all acting under the orders of the supreme head. St Paul refers to this hierarchy in his Epistle to the Ephesians:[4] "And some indeed He gave to be apostles, and some prophets, and others evangelists, and others pastors and teachers for the perfection of the saints, for the work of the ministry, unto the edification of the body of Christ, till we all meet in the unity of faith, etc." And again, writing to the Corinthians,[5] he compares the Church to a body: "We are all baptized in one body," and then he goes on to say, "the body also is not one member but many": there is "the eye," "the foot," "the hand"; each member

[1] Matt. xx. [2] John x. [3] Luke x, 1 [4] Eph. iv, 11. [5] 1 Cor. xii.

has its own work to do: each depends upon, and yet is useful to, the other; sometimes "the more feeble members of the body (being) more necessary," so that there must be no schism in the body; one member must suffer or glory with the other. Then comes his conclusion: "You are the body of Christ and members of member."

2. Our Lord's own comparison of the Church to a kingdom—"the kingdom of God"—is still more striking, and brings out more forcibly the need of hierarchical organization. Our Lord is the invisible King, "the King of ages, immortal, invisible, the only God."[1] The Church, however, being a visible kingdom, must have in like manner a visible king, with a visible ministry. Our Lord Himself appointed the visible king: "Thou art Peter, etc.," leaving to him the appointment of his own ministry. The successor of St Peter does not act autocratically or despotically; he has his properly constituted hierarchy, through the members of which he is in touch with the Church in every part of the world. The cardinals are his courtiers and counsellors, they are called "princes of the Church." They advise and assist the pope in the responsible work of Church government; they frequently preside, by the pope's appointment, over the "congregations" or councils of the Roman court; and when a vacancy occurs in the holy see they elect the sovereign pontiff. The archbishops are the pope's representatives, the ecclesiastical governors of the distant provinces of the Church, subject always, and in all things, to the supreme pontiff. To the bishops is committed the care of the particular dioceses or sees to which they are appointed by the pope, from whom they receive their power, and to whom they are bound at stated times to give an exact account of their stewardship. The priests are the spiritual "ministers of Christ and the dispensers of the mysteries of God"; they receive their jurisdiction from the pope, through their

[1] 1 Tim. i, 17.

respective bishops or superiors, and are in all things responsible through them to him. The members of the religious orders, though in many things independent of the immediate jurisdiction of the bishops, are all absolutely and entirely under the control of the head of the Church; they come and go, they work here or there at his bidding. Deacons, sub-deacons, and those who have the lesser lesser orders, all have their special place and office in the discipline and work of the Church. This we call the hierarchy of the Church, and through this hierarchy the vicar of Christ feeds Christ's sheep and lambs, and, as the visible head, governs the Church committed by the invisible Head to his charge.

3. The will of the pope, however, is not the only law of the Church. His action is not prompted by the autocratic and irresponsible principle of the despot, *Sic volo, sic jubeo; stet pro ratione voluntas* (I order and command this, and my only reason is my own will. No. The government of the Church is a paternal government. The word "pope" means "father"; the pope is "the father of all the faithful." There are, as in every kingdom, certain fixed laws, by which the Church is governed, and to which all her members are bound to give a ready and reverential obedience. (*a*) There are first of all the Ten Commandments of God, which are binding upon all, and from the observance of which, as they come from God, the pope himself is neither exempt, nor can he give exemption. (*b*) Then there are the commandments of the Church, which, being ecclesiastical, may be dispensed with, as far as they are ecclesiastical ordinances, by the sovereign pontiff. These are principally six in number:

1. To keep the Sundays and holydays of obligation holy, by hearing Mass, and resting from servile works.

2. To keep the days of fasting and abstinence appointed by the Church.

3. To go to confession at least once a year.

4. To receive the Blessed Sacrament at least once a year, and that at Easter or thereabouts.

5. To contribute to the support of our pastors.

6. Not to marry within certain degrees of kindred, nor to solemnize marriage at the forbidden times.

(*c*) In addition to these there is a code of laws specially drawn up for the external government of the Church known as "Canon Law"—laws, some of them coming from the earliest times, others of later date, relating to faith, morality and Church discipline, and propounded by ecclesiastical authority for the well-being of the Church and the sanctification of its members. Some of the laws are taken from the scriptures, others from apostolic traditions, others from general councils and the writings of the fathers of the Church, and some from the decisions of the sovereign pontiffs. (*d*) Then we have the laws of *moral theology*, so called because they regulate the morality or moral duties of men. All these are laws by which the Church, and the Church's children, are governed and ruled "for the perfection of the saints . . . . unto the edification of the body of Christ."

4. As in a kingdom there is a legislature or legislative body, whose duty it is to make or modify, to change or abrogate laws according to the exigencies and needs of circumstances and times, so is there in the Church. (*a*) There are œcumenical or general councils convened by the pope at times when he deems there is need, legislative assemblies of cardinals, archbishops, bishops, abbots, heads of religious orders and others, coming from the entire world at the bidding of the sovereign pontiff, who, personally, or by proxy, presides at their sessions or deliberations, and, personally, or by proxy, confirms their decisions, canons or decrees. Of these councils, in addition to the council of Jerusalem mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles,[1] there have been nineteen during the

[1] Acts xv.

history of the Church: (1) The first council of Nicæa or Nice, 325; (2) first of Constantinople, 381; (3) Ephesus, 431; (4) Chalcedon, 451; (5) second of Constantinople, 553; (6) third of Constantinople, 680–1; (7) second of Nicæa, 787; (8) fourth of Constantinople, 869–70; (9) the first of Lateran, 1123; (10) second of Lateran, 1139; (11) third of Lateran, 1179; (12) fourth of Lateran, 1215; (13) first of Lyons, 1245; (14) second of Lyons, 1274; (15) Vienne, 1311–12;[1] (16) Florence, 1438–9; (17) fifth of Lateran, 1512–17; (18) Trent, 1545–63; (19) Vatican, 1869–70. (*b*) Besides general councils there are held in different countries national or "provincial councils" or synods, presided over by the metropolitan and attended by the bishops, superiors of religious orders and other ecclesiastical dignitaries of the land. The acts or decisions of these synods have, before promulgation, to be submitted for approval to the sovereign pontiff before they can have any binding force, even as our Acts of Parliament are submitted to the sovereign of the realm. (*c*) Diocesan synods are also held periodically in each diocese to meet the local needs of the diocese, to enforce general laws which may be falling into desusetude, and to legislate for the peculiar wants of that particular part of the fold.

5. The Church too, like any other kingdom, not only has her legislature, she has also her law courts and her courts of appeal, where laws are interpreted and enforced, disputes settled, and doubts solved in the common interest of the faithful. The central ecclesiastical congregations, or "law courts," as we should call them, are situated in Rome. There are in oll twen-y, the principal of which are: (1) The *Consistory*, in which the subjects are prepared for the papal consistories; (2) the *Holy Office of the Inquisition*, for the examination and condemnation of heresies which may arise, or of dangerous, unsound and unsafe doctrines; (3), the *Index*, which approves or condemns books written

[1] In 1414 there was a 9ouncil of Constance, but it is not by all acknowledged as œcumenical, at least in its entirety.

on subjects of faith or morality; (4) *Bishops and Regulars*, which judges of appeals by religious orders against bishops, or by bishops against religious orders; (5) *The Congregation of Rites*, for the settling of questions of liturgy and the processes of beatification or canonization of saints; (6) *The Council*, specially instituted by Pope Pius IV for the interpretation of the decrees of the council of Trent; (7) *The Congregation of Indulgences and Sacred Relics*, whose duties are epitomized in its name; (8) *The Propaganda*, a congregation formed of cardinals, bishops and regulars for the propagation or propagandism of the faith, and for the governing of the Church in non-Catholic countries. Propaganda has been, not inaptly, called by a distinguished English statesman "the most powerfully disciplined foreign office in the world."

"Fear not little flock for it hath pleased your Father to give you a kingdom"[1] was the word of encouragement which the divine Founder spoke to the Church of His founding. "Jesus Christ hath loved us . . . . and hath made us a kingdom and priests to God and the Father"[2] His beloved apostle adds to that word. The Church is that priestly kingdom, the "kingdom of all ages,"[3] that "shall never be destroyed," but "shall stand for ever,"[4] because it is "set up by the God of heaven." The invisible king is Christ Jesus our Lord, represented visibly by His vicar on earth. This kingdom has its hierarchy, its properly constituted governing powers, its code of laws, its legislature, its courts of law and of appeal, its subjects, loyal and true, throughout the entire world. It has but one King, whom all obey; one code of laws, which all follow; one supreme Judge, to whom all submit; one authority, to which all pay reverential deference; and so it is "knit together," "the whole body being compacted" and forming one undivided and indivisible kingdom, which we call "the holy Catholic apostolic Church."[5]

[1] Luke xii, 32. [2] Apoc. i, 6. [3] Ps. cxliv, 13. [4] Dan. i, 44.

[5] The question of "Salvation outside the Church" is treated in Chapter XXX.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE SACRAMENTS

1. Our Lord Jesus Christ established a Church on earth, over which He appointed a visible head. The Church, like the ark of Noe, is the home of salvation. It is the city of refuge like Bosor in the wilderness, and Ramoth in Galaad, and Gaulan in Basan, in the days of God's servant Josue. All who know of this city of refuge must flee to it, all who know of the truth of the Church of God's founding are bound to enter it: "He that knoweth his Master's will and doeth it not, shall be beaten with many stripes."[1] Mere membership of the Church however is not in itself a guarantee of salvation—"not every one that saith 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven."[2] The child of the Church must make good and practical use of the means of life and grace, provided by the divine Father and Founder. The ordinary means or channels of grace are the sacraments. They are as the "seven steps" by which we ascend to the city of Ezechiel's vision,[3] or as the seven lights which Zacharias saw[4] to direct our feet into the way of peace. God could, of course, save us without the sacraments, even as He could "raise up from the stones children to Abraham;" but we must not expect miracles to which we can lay no claim. The ordinary channels, through which He gives groce and life, are the sacraments, "the outward signs of inward grace by which He conveys grace to the soul."

2. The sacraments were all instituted directly, as some theologians contend, or at least indirectly, by our Blessed Lord. The Council of Trent has defined that they were

[1] Luke xii, 47. [2] Matt. vii, 21. [3] Ezec. xl, 22. [4] Zach. iv, 2.

all "instituted" by Christ Himself; whether mediately or immediately the council does not explicitly decide. St Thomas in every instance teaches that they were directly and immediately of divine institution. It is however only by the authority of the Church that we know which of Christ's actions and ordinances are sacraments and which are not. How are we to know that the washing of the feet, performed and enjoined by our Lord, was not to be a sacrament of the new law in the theological sense of the word, and that baptism was to be, except that the Church has so defined? Without Church authority on this point, as on many others, we should easily wander from the right path. The Catholic Church has spoken upon this subject, with no uncertain voice. She has told her children that there are seven sacraments; and she has defined clearly and distinctly, as she always does, what these seven are. At the Council of Florence (1438) the Latin and Greek fathers were unanimous in their definition. The fathers of Trent renewed the declaration in these words: "If any one shall say that the sacraments of the new law were not instituted by Jesus Christ our Lord, and that there are less or more than seven, to wit, baptism, confirmation, eucharist, penance, extreme unction, order and matrimony. or that any one of these seven is not truly and properly a sacrament, let him be anathema." [1]

3. St Thomas in his *Summa Theologica* [2] shows the congruity of this enumeration from an analogy between the bodily life and the life of the soul, and the needs of the one and the other. In our bodily life we are born and begin to live; then we grow and need strength; our life and strength must be preserved, hence we must have food; we are weakly and sickly, and require medicine; we have duties to others as well as to ourselves—we may be parents or we may be rulers, in either case we must be fitted for the work which we are called upon to do. So, the saint argues, is

[1] Sess. vii, can. 1. [2] Par. 2, quæst. 3, art. lxv.

it in our spiritual life. We are born to God, "born again of water and the Holy Ghost" at baptism; the soul needs strength which comes to us at confirmation; the Holy Eucharist is our spiritual food, "the bread which came down from heaven"; spiritual sickness caused by sin is removed by the salutary medicine of penance or confession; and the scars of wounds or the remains of sin are taken away by extreme unction; if we are to be rulers in the Church of God the power comes through holy orders; if however we are called to the married state the sacrament of matrimony is our help and support.

4. As controversy waxes strong about the sacraments of penance or confession and holy eucharist, these being stumbling-blocks to many outside the fold, we shall have to treat at greater length, and in distinct and separate chapters, of these two channels of grace to the soul. We will now briefly review the Church's teaching on the subject of the other five.

Baptism

THE first sacrament, both in order of receiving and in the imperative necessity of its reception, is baptism. It opens the door of the Church to the recipient, and makes him a member of the fold of Christ, giving him a right to its graces and privileges; it takes away original sin and other sin, if there be other; it makes the child of man a child of God and an heir of heaven. No other sacrament can be received before it; the other six presuppose and pre-require this first. It is the door through which all must enter the fold. The sacrament of baptism is necessary for all, so that without it there can be no union with our Lord in time and no vision of God in eternity. St Thomas,[1] however, makes two exceptions to this general law which requires baptism of water, in favour of those who are incorporated with Christ by what he calls the baptism of desire, i.e., who implicitly or explicitly wish, from the

[1] *Summa* 3, Qu. lxvii, art. 2.

love of God, to be baptized, but who die before their wish can be realized; and again [1] in favour of martyrs who, like the Holy Innocents, are baptized in their blood, and who are "saved yet so as by fire." [2] With these two exceptions all are bound to belong to Christ on earth by baptism, if they are to belong to him in heaven by glory. His own words are clear and decisive, "Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven." [3] Hence the commission to the apostles: "Going therefore, teach all nations, *baptizing them* in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." [4] He gives the reason both for the necessity of the teaching and of the baptism: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." [5] Saul was struck down by the way, and was converted by God Himself; but he must receive baptism, and so "rising up he was baptized." [6] The eunuch of Queen Candace was won to the faith by St Philip the deacon, and "they went down into the water, and he baptized him." [7] And St Peter commanded that his converts should be baptized. [8] So imperative are the words of our Lord that there has been a constant tradition in the Church that even children who have not come to the use of reason should receive the sacrament of baptism. St Thomas, treating of infant baptism, [9] quotes St Dionysius's words, or the words attributed to him: "Our godly leaders, viz., the apostles, approved of infants receiving baptism." St Cyprian, too, writing after the Council of Carthage, A.D. 253, to a certain prelate named Fidus, who had addressed a letter to the council on the subject, replies: "It seemed good, not only to him but to the whole council, that little ones should be baptized, even before the eighth day." [10]

[1] *Summa* 3, lxvii, 2. [2] 1 Cor. iii, 15. [3] John iii, 3.
[4] Matt. xxviii, 19. [5] Mark xvi, 16. [6] Acts ix, 18.
[7] Acts viii, 38. [8] Acts x, 47. [9] *Summa* 3, lxviii, 9.
[10] *Epist.* lxiv, n. 2, *ad Fidum.*

Baptism once given, even to children, can never be repeated, because it imprints an indelible character on the soul, a mark which can never be effaced. A Christian may be a good Christian or a bad Christian; he may live up to or forget his vocation, but he is always a Christian. Once a Christian, a Christian for ever, in time, in eternity, in heaven or in hell; it is, and always will be true that he was baptized. It is true that when non-Catholics are received into the Church, they are generally conditionally baptized; but this is only on account of the uncertainty of their former baptism. Cardinal Newman, who had "seen things from within as well as from without," wrote to a friend: "When I was in the Anglican Church I saw enough of the lax administration of baptism, even among High Churchmen, though, of course, they did not intend it, to fill me with uneasiness."[1] One who for many years was an Anglican minister assured the present writer that, up to a certain period of his clerical life, the baptisms he performed were all invalid, because he had never been taught how to baptize; it was only from reading a Catholic manual that he discovered the error of years, which from that moment he corrected. *Ab uno disce omnes.* This was by no means in those days a solitary case. Were it quite clear and beyond a doubt that any one had been validly baptized, even though by a layman, he could not be re-baptized. It is only because of the doubt of the validity of the previous baptism that we re-baptize, and then *only* conditionally in these words: "*If you are not baptized*, I [now] baptize you," etc. If the convert was previously and properly baptized, the present form is not a baptism, nor is it intended to be; if he was not properly baptized, this form is a baptism, it is intended to be—it secures and safeguards the past.

Confirmation

CONFIRMATION is held by the Church to be a sacrament, the sacrament of strengthening. That it is a sacrament, we

[1] Quoted in *Essays Critical and Historical*, vol. II, p. 110.

believe, on the authority of the Church appointed by our Lord, to "teach" us the way of truth. St Thomas [1] maintains that our divine Lord "instituted this sacrament, not by actually performing it, but by promising that its effects should follow His resurrection, and by appointing His apostles to promulgate it in due time." He quotes the words of promise: "If I go not, the Paraclete will not come; but if I go, I will send Him to you." [2] Then he continues: "In this sacrament we receive the fulness of the Holy Ghost, which was not to be bestowed upon us till after the resurrection and the ascension, for 'the Holy Ghost had not yet been given, for Jesus was not yet glorified.'" [3] When the Holy Ghost came, the promise was realized, and the sacrament was instituted or its institution proclaimed. It was administered in apostolic days; frequent mention of it being made in the Acts of the Apostles, the contemporary history of those times. "They laid their hands upon them, and they received the Holy Ghost." [4] "When Paul had imposed his hands on them, the Holy Ghost came upon them." [5] St Paul evidently alludes to this sacrament when, writing to the Corinthians, he says: "He that confirmeth us with you in Christ, and that hath anointed us, is God, who also hath given the pledge of the Spirit in our heart." [6] Tertullian, in the second century, explains the meaning of confirmation, the "inward grace" conveyed by "the outward sign": "The flesh is anointed that the spirit may be consecrated; the flesh is overshadowed by the imposition of hands that the soul may be illuminated by the spirit of God." [7] St Clement urges Christians to receive this sacrament: "All must hasten to be consigned [i.e., confirmed] by a bishop, and to receive the sevenfold grace of the Holy Ghost."

[1] *Summa* 3.ª lxii, 1. [2] John xvi, 7. [3] John vii, 39.
[4] Acts viii, 17. [5] Acts xix, 6. [6] 2 Cor. i, 21, 22;
[7] *De Resurrect. Carnis,* cap. viii.

Extreme Unction

THE sacrament of extreme unction is so called because it is given by the unction or anointing of the senses of the body, when a Christian is supposed to have come to the end, or to be coming to the end, of his life. There have been anointings before—at baptism and at confirmation; this is the *extreme* or lasting anointing of all. This sacrament rests upon the authority of St James, who in his Catholic epistle[1] writes: "Is any man sick among you? Let him bring in the priests of the Church, and let him pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord." There we have the outward sign. Now he tells of the object of the sacrament, of the effects or inward grace: "And the prayer of faith shall save the sick man: and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he be in sins, they shall be forgiven him." That this, with the other sacraments, was instituted by our Lord is, as we have seen, a definition of the Council of Trent, the sacred council adding that this is "not the invention of man, or even of the fathers of the Church, but that it was instituted by Christ." The angelic doctor reminds us, however, that it is the teaching of certain doctors of the Church that our Lord may have instituted some sacraments directly and others indirectly;[2] some personally, others by commission, i.e., by giving authority to His apostles to do so after His resurrection, when the Holy Ghost should have come down upon them; and he specially instances confirmation and extreme unction. The learned Dominican himself, on the other hand,[3] holds the opinion that our Lord instituted all the sacraments directly and personally, but did not *promulgate* all, leaving the promulgation of some, though not their institution, to the apostles. That our Lord Himself instituted the sacrament of Extreme Unction he concludes[4] from the words of St Mark, who writes of the apostles administering it in our

[1] Jas. v, 14, 15. [2] *Summa Suppl.* xxxix, 3. [3] Ibid.
[4] Ibid. ad 1^m.

Lord's lifetime: "And they cast out many devils, and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them";[1] though all commentators do not identify this anointing with the extreme unction. The object of this sacrament is twofold—either to heal the sick man, if God so wills, or else to prepare him for death and judgement, by taking away the remnants of sin, being, as Origen puts it, "a complement to the sacrament of penance"; by offering up a "prayer of faith" for his welfare in time and in eternity; and by obtaining for him the grace of pardon. This is expressed in the words of St James, as well as in the instructive and beautiful prayer of the liturgy said by the priest, as he anoints each sense of the body through which the sick man may have sinned: "By this holy unction and by His most gentle mercy may the Lord grant thee forgiveness of whatever sin thou hast committed by sight, by hearing," and by each of the other bodily senses. According to the present custom of the Church, extreme unction is not given to children who have not come to the use of reason, because they are incapable of sin, and therefore do not need a sacrament whose intention it is to remove sin. It is given to adults after they have received viaticum, according to the Church discipline of to-day, though probably in former times it was given before the sick received holy communion for the last time. St Thomas says in his *Summa*[2]: "By penance and extreme unction a man is prepared worthily to receive Christ's Body," from which he argues that the sacrament of the holy Eucharist is the greater, indeed the greatest of all the sacraments; and hence all the other sacraments are ordained as preparatory to the most divine sacrament of the Body and Blood of our Lord. St Augustine, on the other hand, speaks of this sacrament being received after the sacred viaticum: "As often as sickness occurs, the sick man shall receive the Eucharist; and then the unction of his body, in order to

[1] Mark vi, 13. [2] 3ª, lxv, 3.

comply with the words of St James: 'If any man is sick amongst you," etc. [1] As this is only a matter of discipline, it may have changed according to the circumstances of time and place. It is clear, however, that extreme unction has ever been held to be a sacrament in God's Church.

Holy Orders

1. THE word "ordo," or order, signifies, according to St Thomas,[2] a grade or class. When we speak of those who are "in orders" or in "holy orders," we mean men dedicated to the work of the ministry, to whom is given by God, through His Church, a special spiritual power to perform the sacred duties of the state to which they are called. That certain men were to be set apart for the work of the ministry is evident from the inspired word of God. It was so in the old law; it was so in our Lord's time, and in apostolic days; it was to be so to all time. Jesus Christ Himself "called the twelve to be apostles," and He chose the seventy-two to be "disciples" and to go before Him "to prepare for His coming." The "shepherd of the sheepfold" was to "enter by the door" if he was to be a true shepherd, for "he that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up another way, is a thief and and a robber." [3] Those whom God has not chosen are "blind and leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both fall into the pit." [4] Then as to apostolic days, in the history of those times it is written: "The Holy Ghost said to them [the apostles]: Separate me Saul and Barnabas for the work whereunto I have taken them. Then they, fasting and praying and imposing their hands upon them, sent them away." [5] That is the record of an apostolic ordination service, one of those ordained being Saul, who had been called by our Lord Himself. Though he was singled out by a divine vocation, he had to "enter

[1] *Serm.*, 279, n. 5. [2] *Summa Suppl.*, qu. xxxiv, art. 1, 2.
[3] John x, 1. [4] Matt. xv, 14. [5] Acts xiii, 2, 3.

by the door" into the sheepfold, he had to be ordained by the ministers of the Church. In the following chapter of the Acts we have the record of another ordination: "When they had ordained to them priests in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord."[1] St Paul gives the reason of this: "Neither doth any man take the honour to himself but he that is called as Aaron was."[2] And the apostle asks unhesitatingly how it can be otherwise: "How shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach unless they be sent?" Then he tells Titus: "I left thee in Crete that thou shouldst ordain priests in every city."[3] And he warns his disciple, Timothy, to sift out those who are to receive the grace of ordination: "Impose not hands lightly upon any man,"[4] having previously instructed him as to the true character and proper dispositions they should have who aspired to be bishops and deacons.[5] St Ignatius bears witness, in the generation succeeding the apostolic generation, to the same tradition of selection, and of the reverence due to the chosen ones: "It behoves you to obey your bishop, and in nothing to resist him . . . . whether you be priest or deacon or layman."[6] Tertullian writes in the earliest part of the third century, as a Catholic author might write in the beginning of the twentieth age: "The bishop indeed has a right to give baptism, and next the priest and deacons, but not without the authority of the bishop."[7] Here we have an early testimony to the need both of ordination and jurisdiction.

2. In the primitive ages of the Church, as St Thomas explains, "On account of the paucity of ministers, to the deacons were entrusted all the duties of the inferior ministers," just as nowadays a priest often has to perform functions which really pertain to the office of a deacon; "Nevertheless the powers of all inferior ministers were con-

[1] Acts xiv, 22. [2] Heb. v, 4. [3] Tit. i, 5. [4] 1 Tim. v, 22.
[5] Ibid. iv. [6] *Epist. ad Magnes.* [7] *De Bapt.*, n. 17.

tained implicitly in the one power of the diaconate. But in later times the Church [divinus cultus] grew, and then she gave explicitly to other ministers some of the powers which the deacons had exercised alone. And this is what is meant when it is said that the Church instituted other orders."[1] In the days of our Lord and the apostles we have, undoubtedly, scripture evidence of the existence of the orders of the priesthood and diaconate ; indeed, we read in the Acts of the Apostles[2] the account of the institution, or as St Thomas would say, the "promulgation," of the diaconal order. Then, as ministers increased in number, and the Church grew in strength, and the organization of the Church assumed its legitimate development, we find the other grades or orders filled by ministers distinct from the deacons and the priests. Hence we have seven grades, or degrees, or orders in the ministry: priests, deacons, sub-deacons, acolytes, lectors, exorcists, and porters or door-openers, so named according to the duties attached to their respective offices. The Council of Trent defines : " If any one shall say that in addition to the priesthood there are not other orders, major and minor, by which, as by so many steps, a man is raised to the priesthood, let him be anathema."[3] The council, moreover, speaks of these orders as seven. The three first-named are called "major" or greater orders; the four others "minor" or lesser, on account of the greater or less dignity and importance of their functions. That "order" is a sacrament is above question ; the Church has defined it so in the Council of Trent, "truly and properly a sacrament instituted by Christ."[4] Whether all, or only some of the orders, are sacraments, has not been clearly and definitely expressed. St Thomas holds that they are all sacraments, all instituted by Christ, though some of them were not promulgated by the Church till later years ; other theolo-

[1] *Summa Suppl.* xxxvii, 2 ad 2[m].
[2] Acts vi.
[3] Sess. xxiii, Can. 2.
[4] Sess. xxii, Can. 3.

gians maintain that the priesthood only is a sacrament—but, of course, all admit *this*, and all must. Some believe that the order of the subdiaconate is sacramental as well. Of the priesthood we may not doubt that it is a sacrament; of the diaconate the common and general opinion affirms that it is a sacrament in like manner; of the subdiaconate the opinion is not so strong, on account of its later institution or promulgation by the Church. Of the four minor orders, practically only those who follow St Thomas's school claim for them sacramental grace and power.

3. For the validity of orders apostolic succession is necessary. All the orders, and indeed any of them, can only be conferred by ministers coming down in a direct line from the apostles to whom our divine Lord gave the power—from those to whom He said: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost; whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven," and to whom, at the last supper, He gave the power of consecration: "Do this in commemoration of Me." The power of ordination comes with the apostolic succession. Where that exists orders are validly given; where it does not exist no ordination can take place. *Ex nihilo nihil fit*—out of nothingness you you can produce nothing; in other words, no one can give to another that which he does not possess himself. Heretical and schismatical bishops, who, though heretics or schismatics or both, have once been united to the apostolic line, having orders themselves, can *validly* ordain others, though of course not licitly. They, however, who do not come down by direct unbroken hierarchic chain from the apostles, may "impose hands," or say words of prayer, but no sacrament is conferred, no power is given, no ordination takes place. It is *vox et præterea nihil*—empty words, nothing more. This is why the Church acknowledges the orders of some of the Eastern schismatic, and even heretical, churches as valid; the chain of succession is unbroken. This is why, on the other hand, the Catholic

Church and the Eastern churches refuse to admit the validity of the so-called "orders," in the Anglican church. There is no succession, many links are missing from the chain, whereas the absence of one would be sufficient to invalidate the succession.[1] The late Cardinal Newman wrote that "the apostolical succession, its necessity and its grace is not an *Anglican tradition*, though it is a tradition found in the Anglican Church." He asks: "I wonder how many of its bishops and deans hold the doctrine at this time; some who do not, occur to the mind at once. One knows what was the case thirty or forty years ago by the famous saying of Blomfield, Bishop of London."[2] The saying the Cardinal refers to was that apostolical succession had gone out with the Non-jurors. For something like three centuries, whatever may have been the opinion of an individual here and there, the Anglican Church neither claimed to possess, nor to have faith in a priesthood which could either give absolution or say Mass. On the contrary, the words "Mass" and "confession" were deliberately struck out of their books (except in the Visitation of the Sick and in "the Ordering of Priests," where the word "confession" still remains); the practice or pretence of either hearing confession or offering sacrifice fell into desuetude; the word "priest," though it appeared in print, was proscribed by Anglican lips. Apostolic succession was neither claimed nor thought needful. In late years, it is true, a small party in that Church have revived these words, and have tried to appropriate all that they imply; but it is too late by three centuries. We cannot put the clock back, nor, Josue-like, "make the sun and the moon stand still, till the people are revenged of their enemies." We cannot recall the dead past.

> Not heaven itself upon the past has power,
> But what has been, has been, and I have had my hour.

[1] See Note on *Anglican Orders*, p. 123.

[2] Letter quoted in *Essays Critical and Historical*, vol. II, p. 109.

4. Celibacy of the Clergy. That the ministers of the Catholic Church who are in sacred orders, i.e., bishops, priests, deacons and subdeacons, are not allowed to marry is well known. This law of a celibate life is an ecclesiastical, not a divine, law. For, although our Blessed Lord, the great High Priest, led a spotless and virginal life, and although most of His apostles had never married even before their apostolic calling, and none of them married after embracing the ecclesiastical state, yet nowhere do we read that He or they, or any of His or their immediate followers, introduced celibacy into Church legislation. They counselled, but did not command it. Consequently being a law of the Church, the Church which made the law can dispense with it, or mitigate it, or modify it, according to the exigencies of time and place, either in the case of all sacred ministers, or in particular instances, for grave and exceptional reasons. In the Eastern Church there is some modification of the legislation on the subject, whilst it prevails in its entirety in the Western Church. In the Western Church the present discipline imposes the obligation upon all in the major or sacred orders. No one is bound to enter into sacred orders; but, if he does enter, he willingly incurs this obligation. The law on this point is an ancient one. St Jerome and St Epiphanius both speak of it: the former taking it for granted that "bishops, priests and deacons are chosen from virgins or widowers, or at least that they remain perpetually chaste after being raised to the priesthood";[1] the latter assuring us that, in his day, "he who leads a married life is not admitted by the Church to the order of priest, bishop, deacon or subdeacon."[2] The Second Council of Carthage, under the presidency of St Cyprian (A.D. 251), in its second Canon, says that "it behoves bishops and priests of God, or even levites, or those who take part in the divine ministry, to be in all ways

[1] *Apologia adv. Pammach.* Ep. 4 (Edit. Paris, 1623).
[2] *Hæres.* liv, n. 4.

continent; so that we may keep to that which the apostles taught and antiquity has observed." The Council of Trent declares, not only that clerics in sacred orders may not marry, but if they go through the form of marriage, the marriage is invalid, the sacred order constituting a diriment impediment to the matrimonial contract.[1] The reason of thts ecclesiastical law is clear. It is that the minister may be devoted entirely to his Master, the shepherd to his flock, the servant of God to God's work. "He that is without a wife is solicitous for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please God. But he that is with a wife is solicitous for the things of the world, how he may please his wife," says St Paul,[2] and he had already said a few verses before: "I would that all men were even as myself." In another place he writes to a bishop: "Be thou an example to the faithful . . . . in charity, in faith, in chastity."[3] The "Imitation of Christ" puts it simply and pithily: "Simple and chaste should be those eyes which are accustomed to behold the Body of Christ. Pure and uplifted to heaven should be the hands which hold the Creator of heaven and earth. Unto priests especially is it said in the law: 'Be ye holy; for I the Lord your God am holy.' Oh, how clean ought to be the hands, how pure the mouth, how holy the body, how immaculate the heart of the priest, into whom the Author of purity enters!"[4]

5. THE DIVINE OFFICE. Another duty of the priest, who has to stand between God and His people, is that of prayer. He ought to ascend the mystic ladder which Jacob saw reaching from earth to heaven, and then descend to bring peace and love to men. That he may be a man of prayer, the Church imposes another obligation upon him, viz., that of the daily divine office, which consists of a number of prayers taken from the bible, especially from the Psalms, and from other sacred

[1] Sess. xxiv, Canon ix. [2] 1 Cor. vii, 32. [3] 1 Tim. xix, 29.
[4] Book IV, xi.

sources. This obligation comes from the earliest times of the Church. Beginning with the sixth century the councils of the Church often speak of it, and exhort clerics to be faithful in the discharge of this, one of their most sacred duties. It is binding upon all in sacred orders, from subdeacons upwards; and it is binding under pain of grievous sin, unless the cleric be legitimately dispensed by authority, or exempt by inability, or excused by excess of work for souls. As Bossuet expresses it: "The minister of Christ has two principal functions, he has to speak to God by prayer, and to speak to men by preaching the gospel." St Paul says of the divine High Priest that "He is always living to make intercession for us."[1] So should it be with the ministers of the High Priest. Hence the Church's legislation.

Matrimony

1. THAT matrimony is a sacrament, is a doctrine of the Catholic Church, defined by the Council of Florence under Pope Eugenius IV, and afterwards by the Council of Trent: "Verily and truly one of the seven sacraments of the gospel law, instituted by Christ our Lord."[2] But before councils had defined this, our Lord Himself and His apostles had anticipated the definition, and the fathers of the councils did but repeat the divine and apostolic words. Our Lord said when appealed to: "What God hath joined together, let no man put asunder."[3] "Marriages are made in heaven," a proverb says, and our Lord's word justifies the saying, "God joins together" the married pair. That word ought to have caused the so-called reformers to hesitate before excluding matrimony from the category of the sacraments. St Paul says expressly and expressively: "This is a great sacrament, but I speak in Christ and in the Church."[4] And although the Protestant version sub-

[1] Heb. vii, 25. [2] Sess. xxiv, Can. i.
[3] Matt. xix, 6. [4] Eph. v, 32.

stitutes "mystery" for sacrament, and some Catholic authorities hesitate about condemning this translation, St Jerome, in his carefully and scholarly edition of the bible, renders it "sacrament," and St Thomas quotes the text as it is translated by St Jerome as an affirmative answer to his question: "Is matrimony a sacrament?"[1] St Augustine speaks of "the holiness of the sacrament" of marriage.[2] St Irenæus and Tertullian make use of the same consecrated word.

2. The Catholic Church has never forgotten that our Lord's first public and, as we may say, official act was to assist at a wedding to bless a newly married couple, and even to work a miracle—His first miracle—in their behalf. Hence has she always been the unflinching and consistent defender of the sacredness of matrimony. A further evidence of this is her firm and uncompromising resistance to what she deems to be an insult to God and a degradation to man, i.e., the iniquitous law of divorce. She does not, she cannot acknowledge this anti-Christian law as a just one, and she forbids her children to avail themselves of it. Should they do so, she never recognizes it; she never did and never will admit that the separation allowed by it is a divorce. Divorce, as it is generally understood—separation that is, implying freedom from the marriage contract with liberty to re-marry during the lifetime of the separated husband or wife—has no place in the terminology of the Catholic Church. Nothing but death can break the marriage ring and sever the marriage tie. The contract was mutually made at God's altar, or at least in the divine presence, "for better for worse . . . . till death do us part." They can never recall that word when once seriously spoken; they can never go back on that promise once solemnly made. Under no circumstances can man—no, not even though that man be the vicar of Christ—pronounce

[1] *Suppl. Sum.* xlii, 1, sed contra.
[2] *De Bono Conjugali,* n. xxiv.

a decree of divorce between man and wife validly wedded for life; for even a vicar is not above his Master, nor can he contradict his Master's word. If at times we read in history of a pope "annulling" or "invalidating" a marriage, it does not mean the dissolution of a marriage once made and consummated—that is impossible. It is only a declaration that a true marriage was never contracted, because an impediment to that marriage existed when the ceremony was performed, although the contracting parties may have been ignorant of the existence of the impediment at the time. When Henry VIII of England petitioned Pope Clement VII to annul his marriage with Catherine of Arragon that he might marry Anne Boleyn, he did not ask for a divorce, in the modern sense of the word—he knew that this was beyond the pope's power—his request was that the pope would declare that there was an impediment existing at the time of the wedding, and that, therefore, it was no marriage at all. There was no impediment, the marriage was valid upon every point. Passion, and not scruple, was the secret of the king's petition. The pope did not, and could not, invalidate that which was clearly valid. Therefore, although the consequences of his refusal were fearful to contemplate, involving an entire country in heresy and schism, he had to be firm and pronounce an uncompromising "*Non possumus*," and, with the courage of a St John the Baptist, he had to say to the sixteenth-century Herod: "*Non licet*—it is not lawful." A vicar cannot exceed his vicarious power; a delegate may not go beyond, much less go counter to, the commission which he has received; a man, even though the man be pope, cannot gainsay the word of God.

The irrevocability of the marriage promise and the indissolubility of the marriage contract rest not upon man's word, nor upon the law of a general council, nor upon the will of the Church, but upon the law of the divine Master. Speaking of marriages He says: "What God hath joined

together let no man put asunder."[1] And foreseeing that men, in after times, would go against His word, He fore told the evil consequences and the sinful result: "Whosoever shall put away his wife and marry another, committeth adultery against her; and if the wife shall put away her husband and be married to another, she committeth adultery."[2] It was useless to argue against His word, as the Pharisees did,[3] that Moses allowed this "bill of divorce"; His only answer was that this was "on account of the hardness of their hearts"; it was not so formerly, nor is it to be for the time to come. He quotes the words of Genesis as the basis of the Christian law: "A man shall leave his father and mother, and *cleave to his wife*. And they two shall be in one flesh. Therefore *now* they are not two but one flesh."[4] Before marriage they were "two," now they are "one," indissolubly one, as though they were parts of "one flesh"; irrevocably one, as though they were members of one body. St Paul is equally unflinching upon the question of the irrevocability of the marriage vow: "Whilst her husband liveth she shall be called an adulteress if she be with another man."[5] Writing to the Corinthians he speaks in a similar strain: "To them that are married, not I" (it is not an ecclesiastical law which the Church can dispense) "but the Lord commandeth" (a divine precept which no man can annul) "that the wife depart not from her husband; and if she depart, that she remain unmarried or be reconciled to her husband. And let not the husband put away his wife."[6] He emphasizes this law in another and perhaps stronger way in the same chapter of the same Epistle: "A woman is bound by the law *as long as* her husband liveth; but *if her husband die*, she is at liberty; let her marry whom she will."[7] Only death can give her "liberty," i.e., freedom from the marriage tie. In certain grave circumstances, and for serious reasons, man and

[1] Mark x, 9. [2] Mark x, 11, 12. [3] Ibid. 4. [4] Ibid. 7, 8.
[5] Rom. vii, 3. [6] 1 Cor. vii, 11. [7] Ibid. 39.

wife may live apart; under peculiarly strained difficulties they may separate for a time; but under no possible circumstances—no matter what the law of the land may say to the contrary—are they free to marry again as long as one or the other lives. "Not I, but the Lord commandeth." The law is divine, not ecclesiastical.

Divorce is the outcome—almost the logical outcome—of the action of the sixteenth century so-called "reformers," in denying to marriage the sanctity and seal of a sacrament. Divorce came in when the sanctity of marriage was gainsaid, and the marriage bond was reduced to the level of a civil and social contract. And hence, where the so-called Reformation gained the ascendency, divorce soon prevailed. In the words of Madame de Staël, in Protestant provinces "they changed husbands and wives as quietly as if they were arranging the incidents of a drama." Protestantism not recognizing marriage as a sacrament, seeing in it only a civil contract, or a mutual agreement on the part of an individual man and an individual woman, easily loosens the bonds of marriage, or looks complacently on whilst the state pretends to loosen them, and quietly acquiesces in the passing of a law of divorce and the creation of a divorce court, where an oath sworn to God and a vow made to the Most High are dispensed by a lay-judge who acts, not in the name of the Church, but of the civil power. A civil contract may be judged by a civil court, but a religious vow does not come under the jurisdiction of a "learned judge." The Protestant Church, as a church, has never even raised its voice in protest against the unjust and unjustifiable law of divorce, whatever individual Protestants may have done. The Protestant Church, as a church, acknowledges the law of divorce, though clearly and evidently against the explicit law, not only of the Church, but of God Himself. For do not her ministers, even her archbishops and bishops, remarry divorced persons during the lifetime of the one to

whom they are formally and validly married, to the scandal of Christendom, to the disgrace of Christians, and in defiance of the word and prohibition of God?

The Catholic Church, on the other hand, has always protested, loudly and consistently, by word, by refusal, by act, in every land against this un-Christian law; and no matter what the consequences—*fiat justitia, ruat cœlum*—she has refused to acknowledge as severable that which God has declared that "no man *can* put asunder." She has always preached, "in season and out of season," that marriage is a "great sacrament," one of the seven instituted by Jesus Christ as channels of grace to the soul and bonds of union between God and man.

CHAPTER XIX

CONFESSION

THE sacrament of penance is the sacrament of forgiveness of sins. Baptism takes away our original sin, our birth sin; penance remits to the properly disposed the sins committed after baptism. The one sacrament is for the cleansing of original sin, the other for the pardon of actual sin. One of the conditions for receiving forgiveness of actual sin is confession. The Catholic doctrine of confession, briefly stated, is this: Every Christian who has come to the use of reason, and has used that reason against God, the giver of it, and has been guilty of a deliberate, grievous or, as we call it, "mortal" sin, whether it be a sin of thought, word, action or neglect, is bound, if he possibly can—be he layman, priest, bishop or even pope—to declare or confess such sin, with all its aggravating circumstances, i.e., any circumstances which substantially add to its gravity, to one duly appointed by the Church to receive that admission, before he can receive the remission or forgiveness of the sin, by virtue of our divine Lord's authoritative commission: "Whose sins ye shall forgive they are forgiven."[1] This is what Catholics mean when they say in the creed, "I believe in the forgiveness of sins." The belief of the Church is that God has communicated to her power to forgive sins through her validly ordained and legitimately appointed priests, but upon these conditions: (1) that the repentant sinner admits his sin; (2) that he regrets his sin and is genuinely sorry for it; (3) that as far as in him lies, he repairs the evil caused to God, to himself, or to his neighbour by his sin; (4) that he does some penance or makes satisfaction to God's justice, whose grace he has despised.

[1] John xx, 23.

These four acts or integral parts of the sacrament, are called, in theological language, confession, contrition, restitution and satisfaction. We may at the outset begin with this truth: We are all sinners. We can all join in the "Confiteor" and say, "I have sinned . . . . through my fault, through my fault, through my grievous fault"; we can all repeat with the priest in the Mass the plaintive words, "Kyrie eleison—Lord have mercy on us, Christ have mercy on us, Lord have mercy"; we may all make our own the admission implied in the "Agnus Dei": "Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us." St John decides the question for us: "If we say that we have no sin we make Him [God] a liar,"[1] and "We deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us."[2]

Satan desires us, great and small,
As wheat to sift us; and we all
Are tempted;
Not one, however rich or great,
Is by his station or estate
Exempted.
No house so safely guarded is
But he, by some device of his,
Can enter:
No heart hath armour so complete,
But he can pierce with arrows fleet
Its centre.

We sin, but God does not abandon the sinner; "there shall be"—there *is*—"a fountain open to Jerusalem . . . . for the washing of the sinner."[3] "If we confess our sins, [God] is faithful and just to forgive us our sins."[4] "If we confess our sins"—the Catholic holds *that* to be a condition of pardon, actual confession if it is possible, confession in desire and explicit intention if we know of the obligation, in implicit intention if as yet we have not explicit faith in the sacrament as a channel of cleansing

[1] 1 John i, 10. [2] Ibid. i, 8. [3] Zach. xiii, 1. [4] 1 John i, 9.

grace to the sinner. St Thomas institutes a comparison between baptism and the sacrament of penance, and concludes that, as the one is necessary for the remission of original, so is the other necessary for the taking away of actual sin; and he adds: "Confession is absolutely necessary for the salvation of those who fall into mortal sin."[1] The Council of Trent almost gives a *verbatim* repetition of St Thomas's conclusion: "This sacrament of penance is necessary for the salvation of those who fall after baptism, even as baptism is for those who are not yet regenerated";[2] and the council defines against the then novel doctrines of Luther and Calvin: "If any one shall deny that sacramental confession is both divinely instituted, and, by divine law, necessary for salvation, let him be anathema." It may be of interest, however, to recall the fact that Luther did not always "deny." In more places than one in his writings he professes his faith in "the power of the Keys," and in the efficacy of Priestly Absolution. "I am as certain of the words in which the priest pardoned my sins, as if I had heard my God Himself speaking them. If they are the words of God, they are undoubtedly effective. I hold to this; I would willingly die in this hope and confidence."[3] He writes elsewhere that he believes in this absolution, even as though "God had sent an angel or an apostle to speak the words, or as if Christ in His bodily presence had absolved him." In another place he tells us not to trust simply in our contrition in which we may be deceived, but rather to the word of Christ who said to Peter, *Whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.* "If thou shalt have obtained pardon from the priest, believe firmly that thou art absolved."[4]

Nor is this doctrine of confession and absolution a hard one. If a criminal standing in his guilt before the judge were promised pardon and release provided he would only

[1] *Opera Omnia,* Vol. I, p. 301. *Jena* (1612).
[2] Ibid. Vol. I, p. 31.
[3] *Summa Suppl.* qu. vi, art 1. [4] Sess. xi, Can. 2.

admit that he had been guilty of the wrong-doing for which he was on trial, would he consider this a hard condition? would he not cry out: "My Lord Judge, I am guilty"? If a man, sick unto death, and racked in bodily pain which could only have one ending, were told that he would be raised from his sick bed a strong man if he would point out the seat of his pain, and reveal the reason of his malady, would he not consider this a merciful providence rather than a cruel and selfish demand? Even so, confession is a sign of God's merciful love and loving mercy, and not of His hard and harsh justice. We may say of confession that (1) it answers to a demand of our nature; (2) that it is a law of the living God; (3) that He who made the law appointed the confessor through whom He willed that His law should be carried out; (4) that He exacted, and still exacts, from the penitent certain conditions which predisposes him for pardon.

1. Confession an Instinct of our Nature

When we say that confession comes, as it were, naturally to man, we do not speak of sacramental confession: that, as we shall see, is an ordinance—a supernatural ordinance—of God. This is St Thomas's meaning when he writes that confession is not *de jure naturali*, i.e., a natural law; he adds: "Confession, which is necessary as a sacrament, is a divine law, and not a law of nature";[1] and, later on, he further proves that all are bound to obey this divine law of confession.[2] We are speaking of *instinct* and not of law, and we maintain that confession or the revealing of something which is, as we say, "on our mind," is a relief to our mind, and that, therefore, this revelation is a craving of our better and higher self. (*a*) We see this in children. The difference between a good child and one who has not good dispositions, or is not well disposed, is that the one is frank and open and freely admits its fault, the other denies it, hides it, makes ex-

[1] *Summa Suppl.* vi, 2. [2] Ibid. art. 3.

cuses for it, or throws the blame upon another. A well-disciplined child, if he has done wrong, feels the wrong as a burden upon its little mind; its heart is sad; tears come to its eyes; it goes to its mother, openly admits its fault, and asks pardon for its wrong-doing. The mother listens to her little one; she gives it some slight penance or punishment perhaps; then pardon follows. Here we have confession, contrition, satisfaction. The mother is the confessor, the child is the penitent, the admission of the fault is the confession. (*b*) A friend confesses to his friend, if he has done him an injustice. If he has said a harsh, unkind word to his friend, or done an action that was mean and unworthy, or omitted wilfully or negligently something which he was bound by duty or promise to do, what does his instinct tell him? To go to his friend, to admit his fault, to say that he is sorry. And the offended friend will be appeased, the cloud which had obscured the friendship will be removed, and they will be friends again. This is nature's confession. (*c*) Even if by carelessness we brush up against a stranger in the street, we ask his pardon. "I beg your pardon," comes naturally to our lips, and he smiles his forgiveness. Nature's confession once more. (*d*) They who rail at confession and cry it down, are, by a strange contradiction, daily making confession, without, however, calling it by the name. Such phrases in our language as "I beg your pardon," "I am very sorry," "Can you forgive me?" "Let us make it up," "Let bygones be bygones," are all evidences of the natural instinct which prompts a generous mind to admit, i.e., to confess, his fault, and ask for pardon, i.e., absolution.

Strange to say, confession is a dominant principle in our English legal system. The law of our land does not allow a man to be condemned unheard. This is an axiom of English justice. A reputed criminal is accused of a crime. He stands before the judge to await his trial. What is the first procedure that the law insists upon in a criminal trial? Confession. The prisoner is asked to

plead "Guilty or not guilty?" i.e., "Will you confess?" or "Do you refuse to admit your guilt?" If he confesses, probably it will be better for him. He may be spared much that is humiliating in the public evidence of others, and his sentence may be the lighter on account of his admission. If he pleads "Not guilty," i.e., refuses to confess, still the confession must come, from others, if not from himself, and he must listen to the proof of his guilt. Witnesses are called, eye-witnesses if possible, who saw him do the evil thing, ear-witnesses who heard him admit it, witnesses who can at least give circumstantial evidence, which brings the crime home to the accused. And it is only when this confession has been made by the guilty man, or extorted from others against his will, that sentence of condemnation or acquittal may be pronounced by the presiding judge.

2. The desire for confession is often seen in the voluntary admission of crimes which the man who admits is not bound, except under the impulse of this instinct, to acknowledge. How often it happens that one who has refused to plead "guilty" at his trial, before he goes to prison or death confesses his crime, as though he were unable to carry its burden with him to the solitary cell, or to the cheerless grave. The lips that were sealed, and the heart that was closed before the judge, open and speak before this natural impulse. How often do we read and hear of men and women disclosing a secret crime, which would never have been discovered? They give themselves up to justice as though unable to keep their terrible secret locked up in their hearts. As the murderer sees his victim's blood everywhere—on his hands, upon his clothes, on the bread that he eats, on the green grass and the flowers—so does the guilty man feel the weight of his sin as a burden too heavy to bear alone. "*Because I was silent*, my bones grew old, whilst I cried out all the day long; for day and night Thy hand was heavy upon me; I am turned in my anguish whilst the thorn is fastened. I have acknowledged my sin

to Thee, and my injustice I have not concealed. I said: I will confess against myself my injustice to the Lord, and Thou hast forgiven the wickedness of my sin."[1] As a river that is over-full overflows, so do we wish to reveal our hidden sorrow, to pour it out into the ear and heart of another. "If I could only tell some one!" we say. "If I don't speak, my heart will break." Tears from the eye and confession from the lips are the safety-valves which give relief to sorrow, pent up in the heart. We must speak to some one, and our confidential friend is nature's confessor, our confidence nature's confession. Madame Swetchine before her conversion experienced this desire, and wrote in one of her "Letters": "I feel sometimes so great a need of confession that I could go to the world's end to open my mind."[2]

3. If we close our heart and seal our lips, how great our sorrow seems; if we open our hearts and speak, what a relief it brings. The heart is like a wound—if it is closed there is pain, if the wound opens it brings relief. We have often seen this in others, perhaps we have experienced it in ourselves. *(a)* A man is on a bed of sickness. The doctor comes, and can find no sign of disease. The man is ill, undoubtedly ill, very ill, seriously ill; yet there is no disease. What is it? There is something on his mind. He needs some one to "minister to a mind diseased." "Try and get him to speak," the doctor says, "and tell his sorrow and trouble." He speaks, and he is better. *(b)* How many are there in our asylums, hopelessly insane, because they had a trouble which they kept to themselves to eat their heart away? They thought about it, and brooded over it till, as in the vision of the prophet's servant, the cloud, first "the size of a man's foot," grew and grew till it filled the horizon of their life with cloud, and in the dense darkness the light of their reason was overpowered and went out. *(c)* How many are there on the streets of our

[1] Ps. xxxi, 3, 5. [2] *Life*, p. 73.

great towns, given up to nameless shame and shameless sin, who if when they were first deceived, and first fell, almost perhaps without fault of their own, they had confessed their fall, would have received advice and help and pardon, and would have been spared a life of misery themselves, and would have prevented a heart-broken mother from dying of grief and sorrow? *(d)* How many, again, pass much of their wasted lives in prison—"gaol-birds" we call them—who go back to prison as naturally as the bird goes to its nest, the lion to its lair, and the pig to its sty, who if at the beginning they had told of their first crime, might have been respectable members of society? *(e)* How many, once more, whose bodies have been buried in watery graves—in the Seine, the Tiber, the Danube or the Thames—might have been alive to-day if they had not kept some secret to themselves to gnaw their heart, and weaken their reason, and blight their life, and end their days? *(f)* How many are there perhaps in hell who might when on earth have been snatched as a brand from the burning if they had only made known their sin?

As there is nothing so dangerous to the state as a secret society, so there is nothing so dangerous to the individual as a secret sorrow locked up, as in an iron-bound coffer, in the mind. A wise government will allow freedom of speech, and will encourage men with a political or social grievance, real or imaginary, to ventilate their views, to speak out, provided they do not incite to lawlessness and crime—then the danger is minimized. So with the individual. Confession is a demand of the human heart. Deny it to that heart, and like evil humours in the body, the heart's sorrow will cause misery and pain, or like the legion of demons imprisoned in the herd of swine, the life's sin will drive a man to moral self-destruction; it will lead to spiritual death and wretchedness untold. But let the heart open and the lips speak, and the very telling of the sin, independently of the grace of pardon, will act as a

soothing balm to the soul. We have seen this in others; we have read of it times without number; we have experienced it in our own lives. How beautifully does Cardinal Newman express this thought in his lectures on "The Present Position of Catholics in England":

"How many are the souls in distress, anxiety or loneliness whose one need is to find a being to whom they can pour out their feelings unheard by the world! Tell them out they must; they cannot tell them out to those they see every hour. They want to tell them, and not to tell them; and they want to tell them out, yet be as if they were not told; they wish to tell them to one who is strong enough to bear them, yet not too strong to despise them; they wish to tell them to one who can at once advise and can sympathize with them; they wish to relieve themselves of a load, to gain a solace, to receive the assurance that there is one who thinks of them, and one to whom in thought they can recur, to whom they can betake themselves, if necessary from time to time, while they are in the world. How many a Protestant's heart would leap at the news of such a benefit, putting aside all distinct ideas of a sacramental ordinance, or of a grant of pardon and the conveyance of grace! If there is a heavenly idea in the Catholic Church, looking at it simply as an idea, surely, next after the Blessed Sacrament, confession is such. And such is it ever found in fact—the very act of kneeling, the low and contrite voice, the sign of the cross hanging, so to say, over the head bowed low, and the words of peace and blessing. Oh, what a soothing charm is there which the world can neither give nor take away! Oh, what piercing, heart-subduing tranquillity, provoking tears of joy, is poured, almost substantially and physically upon the soul, the oil of gladness, as scripture calls it, when the penitent at length rises, his God reconciled to him, his sins rolled away for ever! This is confession as it is in fact; as those bear witness to it who know it by experience."[1]

[1] Lecture vii.

4. It is because of this natural craving or instinct for confession that even those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death, who have not received the revelation of the gospel, nor heard the name of Jesus Christ, have practised or still practise confession. Even pagans realize the want which some Christians deny to themselves and would deny to us. Auguste Nicolas in his "Études Philosophiques"[2] quotes several pagan and infidel authorities in favour of the necessity of confession. The ancient legislator of India said: "The more a man who has committed a sin truly and voluntarily confesses it, the more he rids himself of it, even as a serpent casts its old skin." The Athenian philosopher, Socrates, guided only by human reason, wrote: "If a man has done an injustice, he should accuse himself of it, he should bring it to light that he may be punished and cured. . . . Else," he adds, "the disease of the soul will become an ulcer." Voltaire, the French infidel, admitted that: "Confession is an excellent thing; it is a curb to the greater crimes." Again: "Confession is almost as ancient as civil society." Once more: "The wise men of antiquity were sensible of its importance, and if they were unable to make it an obligation on all, they at least established the practice for those who aspired to a blameless life." The same writer, Nicolas, also reminds us that confession is practised to some extent by Buddhists, Mohammedans, and of course in the Eastern Christian churches.

The pseudo-reformers of the sixteenth century were afraid, for some time, to abolish confession, which took from men one of the comforts and solaces of the Christian life. Some of them even spoke or wrote words in praise of the practice of confession. In the *Confession of Augsburgh*, dictated by Luther and drawn up in 1530 by Melancthon, which was subscribed to by most of the German Protestant leaders of the day, it is said: "Private absolution is to be retained in the Church, although the enumeration of *all* sins is not necessary, because this is impossible." Once more:

[2] Partie II, chap. xvi.

"Confession is not done away with in our churches. For the Body of the Lord is not to be delivered to any except they are first examined and absolved. And the people are to be most diligently instructed in the faith of absolution... The people are taught to hold the absolution in great esteem; because it is the voice of God and pronounced by His command."[1] All the world knows that to this day the words approving of confession have never been removed from the Book of Common Prayer; and that in "The Visitation of the Sick" the rubric directs: "Here shall the sick person be moved to make a special confession of his sin. After which confession the priest shall absolve him after this sort: Our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath left power to His Church to absolve all sinners who truly repent and believe in Him, of His great mercy forgive thee thy sins. And by His authority committed to me I absolve thee from all thy sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen." In the service for "the ordering of priests" the bishop is still told to say to the candidate: "Whose sins thou dost forgive they are forgiven, and whose sins thou dost retain they are retained." Here is a testimony to the voice of nature which even the "reformers" could not stifle, and so were they obliged to leave the words in the ritual, although for three hundred years they have practically rendered them void. These words have brought about what is called "the crisis in the [Anglican] Church"—these words and the instinct of nature combined. Hence is there to-day a large party, and a daily increasingly large party, of Anglicans who are trying to put the clock back three hundred years, and return to the faith of their fathers. They are moved to this, clearly, not by respect for or obedience to the Church which still retains the form in her ritual, but from reading the words of Christ, studying the writings of the early

[1] Chapters ii and iv. Also cf. Bishop Burnet's *Exposition of the Thirty-nine Articles* (London, 1837, pp. 524 and 536).

doctors of the Christian Church and listening to the instinct of their nature, which demands confession. God gave the instinct—we see it in children, in pagans and unbelievers; and so with the instinct He gave the means of satisfying that craving. We thirst, He provides water to slake our thirst; we hunger, through kind mother nature He gives us food; we wish to know the truth, He reveals it to us; we crave to love, He gives us some one to love—Himself, and then our fellow-men. So when we are burdened with sin and we long to relieve ourselves of the burden He provides us with the relief in confession; our heart is full of sorrow, He gives us a safety-valve in confession, by which we can empty our heart into the willing ear and the sympathetic heart of His minister.

2. Confession an Ordinance of God

CONFESSION is the demand of a sinful and sorrowful heart. A child confesses to its mother; a friend to his offended friend; a prisoner to the judge. Pagans, unbelievers, infidels bear witness to nature's craving; Salvationists and Methodists testify to it in their religious and "revival" and "experience" meetings; members of the Anglican Church in their recurrence to the practice, which for three hundred years had been in abeyance. It relieves the tension of a troubled mind, and gives peace to a heart which cannot rest; it is a solace in distress; it heals spiritual wounds or prevents their silent growth.

> Confess yourself to heaven;
> Repent what's past; avoid what is to come;
> And do not spread the compost on the weeds,
> To make them ranker,

is Hamlet's sound advice to the guilty queen. But we have a further reason and a more cogent one. Confession is a command of God, an expression of His will, an integral part of His law to man. Grace is superadded

to nature, nature is lifted up by grace. As a wise architect God, who is the author of nature as well as of grace, builds the supernatural structure on the foundations of nature's laying. We wash our bodies in water; He gives us water in baptism for the cleansing of our souls. We strengthen our bodies with bread; He gives us the divine Bread of the Eucharist, "the living Bread come down from heaven," for the strengthening of our soul. We use oil as a salve for our bodily wounds; He ordains us the use of oil in confirmation, orders and the last sacrament, for the healing or strengthening of our spiritual life. We confess to others for the relief of our mind; He prescribes confession for the removing of sin from our soul. His will is written on our hearts. Further, it is commanded (1) in His revelation, (2) by the voice of His Son, (3) and by the authoritative teaching of His Church. The instinct of nature planted in us by nature's God is raised into a sacrament by the God of grace and supernatural power.

1. It is well for us to say at once, to say it out and to say it boldly. It is for God, and not for us, to determine how our sins are to be forgiven; it is for Him to dictate His terms of pardon, and not for us to dictate to Him. We are sinners, criminals, culprits; we have rebelled, and revolted against His will; it is for Him to say how we are to be reconciled to Him. We must ask with Saul, when He found it "hard to kick against the goad": "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?"[1] or with Samuel when we, as he, are in the darkness of night: "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth";[2] or with the Parthians and Medes and Elamites, when Peter spoke to them on the first Pentecostal day: "Men, brethren, what shall we do?"[3] And what is the answer? The answer of Josue to Achan when he had sinned: "My son, give glory to the Lord God of Israel, and confess; tell me what thou hast done; hide it not";[4] or the answer which Jesus gave to the lepers "in

[1] Acts ix, 6. [2] 1 Kings iii, 10. [3] Acts ii, 27. [4] Josue vii, 19.

a certain city" nearly two thousand years ago: "Go, show yourselves to the priest." And what will be the result of this self-manifestation? Not as in the case of Achan, in the old law, stoning and "wroth," and "Achor," a place of trouble. No, but pardon and cleansing, as in the history of the lepers of the Christian times: "And it came to pass that as they went they were made whole."

This pardon of sins confessed was the promise of the divine Saviour. "Amen I say to you," was His pledge to His future priests, "whatsoever you shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever you shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."[1] That promise He redeemed after His resurrection. He stood in their midst, and said: "Peace be to you"; "He showed them His hands and side," with the marks of the wounds made by sin, the channels through which came the Precious Blood which was to cleanse from sin; "He breathed upon them," as He breathed upon Adam in Eden; and as to Adam so to the apostles, with that breathing there came a new life and a new power. What was that power? His words express it: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost; whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven them, and whose sins you shall retain they are retained."[2] Here is the commission of Jesus Christ to His apostles. And those who succeed to their office coming in a direct line from them succeed to their vicarious power, and inherit their character, their mission, their apostolate, "the ministry of reconciliation"; for, as St Paul explains so emphatically, "But all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to Himself by Christ, *and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation.* For God, indeed, was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing to them their sins; and *He hath placed in us the word of reconciliation.* We, therefore, are ambassadors for Christ. . . . For Christ, we beseech you, be ye reconciled to God."[3] These words of the apostle put

[1] Matt. xviii, 18. [2] John xx, 21-3. [3] 2 Cor. v, 18-20

in juxtaposition with the commission of Christ our Lord, reveal to us the belief of apostolic times in the divine mandate to the Church appointing and constituting a reconciling, i.e., an absolving priesthood. "None can forgive sins but God," it is true; but He can, He did, He still does, delegate that power to His priests. Sinners are still forgiven, sin is still taken away, still by "the Lamb of God," still by the divine power, but through "the ministry of reconciliation" committed to His divinely-appointed priests, in whom He hath "placed the word of reconciliation."

2. "Whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven." Here is implied the necessity of the admission of our sin; here, consequently, we have, implicitly, the divine ordinance of confession, not simply as a relief to the mind, an outpouring of grief, a solace to the sin-stricken soul, but as a means of reconciliation and pardon. "Whose sins you shall forgive." True; but how forgive them if they are not known, and how they can be known unless they are made known, revealed, in other words, confessed to the minister of pardon? As you cannot love an unknown person, so you cannot forgive an unknown fault. If they are hidden in the sinner's heart, as rocks in the depths of the sea, and as minerals in the womb of the earth, how can the priest take cognizance of them? how "take them away?" how pardon them? A doctor could not cure his patient by applying suitable remedies if the patient did not tell his symptoms, his pains, his weakness, his hidden troubles which the doctor cannot see. If he had a wound in his hand and insisted upon keeping his glove on, if he suffered from an internal pain and refused to say whether it was an acute pain or a throbbing pain, whether it was chronic or intermittent, how could the doctor, even though a skilful man, apply a remedy? How could a lawyer advise a client if the client refused to reveal the circumstances of his case, even those which told against him or which perhaps were to his shame?

A judge would be powerless, he could neither acquit nor condemn, if the prisoner would not plead or the witnesses give their evidence. My friend cannot expect my forgiveness if I do not know, and he will not tell me what he has done or said against me, and how often he has said it or done it, and what his motive has been in the saying and doing. Even so the priest is powerless to forgive and pardon, although Christ has said, "Whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven," unless the penitent reveals his sin. He is a reasonable man, and not an automaton or a machine; he is not a parrot or a mocking-bird. His words must have a meaning, and when he says, "I absolve," he must know from what he absolves, else the absolution will be in vain.

3. But some one may say: "God knows my sin, even my most secret thought and will." True, but the priest does not; and God forgives through him as his "minister of reconciliation"; consequently he too must know, if he is to act as a reasonable man. And even though the priest knew, outside the confession, the sins his penitent has to confess, still must they be told to the minister, still must they be submitted to the power of "the keys," for the sinner's humiliation and for the pardoning of the sin. A mother knows that her child has done wrong, the child must admit the wrong all the same. We know that our friends have hurt us by their acts, their words or their neglect; we expect them, nevertheless, to acknowledge their wrong-doing and to ask for pardon. How often people say: "I would forgive him, if he would only acknowledge his fault." Pardon presupposes confession.

Such is man's way, such is God's way as well. He too exacts confession, although He certainly knows our sin. (1) Adam had sinned, and God wished to forgive his sin, but it must be subject to the law of confession. The Most High goes to the garden whose fruits have withered, whose flowers have faded through the terrible blight of

sin. Adam hides behind the trees. But no, he must confess! "Where art thou, Adam?" God cries, and the culprit comes before his offended Lord and makes his confession: "The woman whom Thou gavest me to be my companion gave me of the tree, and *I did eat.*" Then Eve had to come and make her confession. "Why hast thou done this?" the Lord God said to the woman. And she answered: "The serpent deceived me, and *I did eat.*" Then God gave the penance to man and to wife—the one has to work in the sweat of his brow, and the earth that he tills is to bring forth thorns and thistles; the other is to bring forth children in sorrow, and because she has deceived her husband she is to be "under his power," and he is to "have dominion over her"; and the one and the other are to return to the dust from which they were taken.[1] (2) Adam's eldest son, Cain, would not confess his murder, in that "he rose up against his brother Abel, and slew him." The Most High, as a skilful confessor—if we may say this in all reverence of God—would have had him confess; He led up to the sin: "Where is thy brother Abel?" He knew where he was: the voice of his blood had cried from the earth, but He wanted the admission. Oh, if Cain had only said: "I have sinned. My brother's blood is on my hands. I will wash them in water, and I will burn them in fire. I have sinned, and I will expiate my sin"! But no! he evaded the question: "Am I then my brother's keeper?" He closed his heart, and sealed his lips, and so he was "cursed upon the earth" which had received his brother's blood, he was "a fugitive and a vagabond," he had "a mark upon his brow," and his end, to say the least, is uncertain.[2] (3) Lamech listened to the instinct of nature and the dictate of conscience, and confessed, though probably his killing a man was in error, and not in malice: "Hear my voice . . . . hearken to my speech; for I have slain a man to the wounding of myself, and a stripling to my own bruising."[3] (4) Every one is

[1] Gen. iii [2] Gen. iv. [3] Gen. iv.

familiar with the history of David's confession. He had been guilty of a double sin. Nathan, the prophet, was his confessor. Under the form of a parable the prophet related to him the injustice and sin of a certain man. David was indignant, and wished to punish the injustice. "Who is he?" he asked. Then Nathan brought his sin home to the king. "Thou art the man." Then came the royal penitent's confession: "I have sinned against the Lord." The confessor gave a penance: "The child that is born to thee shall surely die." And then absolution followed: "The Lord hath taken away thy sin."[1]

4. Confession was not merely a custom and a counsel amongst the Jews, it seems to have been in some way a law; though, doubtless, they had not the practice of confession in the systematic way that prevails amongst Christians. Allusions are made here and there to this law. Thus, in the Book of Numbers,[2] God told Moses to say to the people: "When a man or woman shall have committed any of all the sins that men are wont to commit, and by negligence shall have transgressed the commandments of the Lord, and offended, they shall *confess* their sins, and restore the principal itself and the fifth part over and above to him against whom they have sinned." Here we have confession followed by restitution. In the Book of Proverbs,[3] again, we read this word: "He that hideth his sins shall not prosper; but he that shall *confess* and forsake them shall obtain mercy." The son of Sirach gives sage advice to his son: "Be not ashamed to *confess* thy sins; but submit not thyself to every man for sin."[4] The fourth chapter of the Book of Leviticus is the history of confession, not in theory but in practice. Those who have sinned even "through ignorance" are commanded to come and acknowledge their sins—whether priests or people—they have to offer sacrifices in expiation of their

[1] 2 Kings xii. [2] Numb. v. [3] Prov. xxviii, 13.
[4] Ecclus iv, 31.

sins; the priest has to "pray for the sinner and for his sin," and "it shall be forgiven him."

5. When we come to the new law, the sacramental law, we find the development of the Jewish practice. Our Lord Himself before forgiving sin exacts confession. He gives sight to the blind man only when he acknowledges his blindness and asks for sight, "Lord, that I may see"; He straightens the crooked limb only when the one who is lame admits the defect and wishes "to be made whole"; so in like manner He forgives the sinner when he asks for pardon and admits his sin. The woman at the well of Samaria had to confess that she was living in sin before our Lord sent her as an apostle to her city to bid others come to Him who had revealed to her her inmost soul.[1] Magdalen had to kneel at His feet in sorrow before He said: "Many sins are forgiven her because she has loved much."[2] The penitent thief made confession: "We indeed have done deeds worthy of this death," and asked for pardon: "Lord, remember me when Thou shalt come into Thy kingdom," before he received absolution: "Amen, I say to thee, this day thou shalt be with Me in paradise."[3] The prodigal's repentance is confession in parable: "He entered into himself," i.e., he examined his conscience; he made a resolution to give up his sin: "I will arise"; he made his act of confidence: "I will go to my father"; he promised to go to confession: "I will say 'Father, I have sinned'"; he was humbled in his sorrow: "I am not worthy to be called thy son"; he was ready to do penance in expiation of his sin: "Make me as one of thy hired servants." Then he puts all these good resolves into practice—he arises, goes to his father, makes his confession. Then comes the absolution and reconciliation. The father "was moved with compassion, and running to him fell upon his neck, and kissed him." Then "the joy at the sinner doing penance": "Bring hither the fatted

[1] John iv. [2] Luke vii. [3] Luke xxiii.

calf, and let us make merry, because this my son was dead and is come to life again, was lost and is found." [1]

6. Such was the practice and teaching of the Master, such is, and must be, the teaching and practice of the disciples, His followers. It was so in apostolic days; it has been so through the ages ever since; it must be so to the end. In the earliest age of the Church we are told in her earliest record that when St Paul was at Ephesus "many of them that believed came, *confessing and declaring their deeds.*" [2] That was the practice, here is the teaching: "If we *confess* our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all iniquity." [3] "Confess your sins one to another." [4]

This practice was continued, and the doctrine of confession was taught, in the ages immediately succeeding the apostolic age. To read the writings of some of the early apologists of the Catholic Church, one could almost imagine that one was reading the spiritual book of an ascetic writer of our own times. We can almost see the faithful in the catacombs, and afterwards in the churches which sprang up, as though by magic, in the days of Constantine, or in the temples which were once pagan and then, being cleansed and purified, were converted into Christian churches. We can almost see them flocking around the priests, striking their breasts, lifting up their voices in confession, and then receiving absolution from the almost immediate heirs, the heirs at all events in a direct line, of those men who heard from the lips of Christ Himself the words of marvellous power: "Whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven." At one time in the Church's history, confession, at least of public sins, was made publicly. Then came the decree of Pope Leo the Great in the fifth century, as a remedy to abuses

[1] Luke xv. [2] Acts xix, 18. [3] 1 John i, 9. [4] James v, 16.

which had begun to creep in: "There shall be no declaration of any kind of sin given in writing and publicly read; it is enough that the guilt of conscience be made known to the priests alone by means of private confession."[1] Thus private confession has always been practised.

We are told by some anti-Catholic writers that "confession is an invention of priests, and dates from the thirteenth century." An invention of priests! Can any one imagine priests being such arrant and consummate fools, even though they were such sacrilegious and blasphemous knaves, as to invent confession? Invent confession, when they themselves, from the pope to the youngest priest in the Church, have all to submit to the humiliation of confession! Invent confession, when they have to hear confessions, the most tedious, irksome and, naturally speaking, the most uninteresting of all the priestly duties! And if the priests invented confession, can we imagine the laity calmly looking on and approving of the invention? Would the greatest minds of Christendom for centuries of time have humbled themselves, as they have done, in going to confession unless they could clearly see in the sacrament the institution of divine wisdom, mercy and power? And in the thirteenth century too, when bright intellects and proud spirits were certainly not wanting either in the Church or in the world?

But why do they fix the date of the institution as the thirteenth century? It is not too difficult to see how this fallacy arose. There is a substratum of fact underlying every calumny, else it could not stand at all; there is a grain of truth in every lie, else it would command no man's attention; there is a germ of reality in every invention and fraud, otherwise people would not be taken in. Here is the substratum of fact, the grain of truth, the germ of reality. In the thirteenth century, to be precise, in the

[1] *Ep.* 168 *ad Episcopos Campaniæ* (Edit. Migne).

year 1215, the fourth Council of the Lateran was held in Rome. It was attended by some four hundred bishops and somewhere about a thousand abbots, and it was under the presidency of Pope Innocent III. In that council a decree [1] was made, which is still binding in our own times and in our own land, commanding every Catholic of mature age to go to confession at least once a year, under the penalty of being cut off from the Church whilst living, and of being deprived of Christian burial when dead. The council did not introduce the practice of confession—it presupposed it, for it pre-existed—but simply determined the time at which all who wished to be practical members of the Church, must have recourse to the sacrament of reconciliation and pardon. If the imperial parliament were to pass a law that all tax-payers were to pay their taxes between January 1 and April 1 of each year, we could not infer from that that the law of paying taxes was new, but only that the time of the paying was specified. So with the Council of Lateran. The decree referred to only ordered to be carried out at a specified time a practice which had been in existence for twelve hundred years.

7. Confession, resting upon divine authority, has always been part of the discipline of the Church. The manner, the time, the external ceremonies, the place may be legislated for by ecclesiastical authority; the practice itself and the doctrine are of divine ordinance. That this is so was evident to the fathers of the Church, who pre-existed the Lateran Council by many centuries. We can only find space for three or four citations, although they might be multiplied almost indefinitely. St Basil, who died A.D. 380, writes: "It is necessary to confess sins to him to whom has been committed the dispensation of the mysteries of Christ." [1] Tertullian (second century) has a treatise on penance, or repentance, in twelve chapters, in which there are many suggestive passages on the subject of confession.

[1] Can. xxi. [2] *Regul. Brev.*, int. 288.

The compilers or translators of the Anglican "Library of the Fathers" say of the treatise: "Its whole tone is, however, Catholic." Truly, on the question of confession, it is catholic; so catholic that the Anglican editors have to add copious notes to try and explain it away; as, for instance, when they are constrained to admit that Tertullian taught the practice and doctrine of confession, but add that "the point at issue between the Romanists and ourselves is, whether confession is so essential to absolution that the benefits of absolution cannot be had without it, and whether a Church, like our own, has a right to *dispense with it*."[1] Tertullian himself did not seem to think that "confession" was not "essential" to "absolution," nor did he teach that a branch cut off from the Church could "dispense with it." "Confession of sin lighteneth their burden," he writes,[2] "as much as dissembling of them increaseth it." . . . "Wherefore, confession is a discipline, i.e., a law, for the abasement and humiliation of man." He compares the folly of a man who from shame confesses not, to the madness of one who hides from the doctor a secret malady. Then he continues sarcastically: "Verily the concealment of a sin promiseth a great benefit to our modesty. Namely, that if we withdraw anything from the knowledge of men we shall conceal it also from God," and adds, "It is a miserable thing to come thus to confession." "Is it better," he asks, "*to be damned in secret* than absolved publicly?" In the following chapter Tertullian says forcibly: "If thou drawest back from confession, consider in thine heart that *hell fire*, which confession shall quench for thee, and first imagine the punishment, that thou mayest not doubt concerning the adoption of the remedy. . . . When, therefore, thou knowest that thou hast in confession a second aid against hell fire, why dost thou neglect thy salvation? why delay to enter into that which thou knowest

[1] Note *M.* "On the Absolute necessity of Confession," p. 379.

[2] *De pœnit.* xi, "Library of Fathers," vol. I, p. 364.

will heal thee?".[1] Origen, again, who lived in the third century, amongst many commentaries wrote two homilies on he thirty-seventh Psalm. It is impossible for us to do more than refer to them, but the reader is recommended to peruse them, if it is in his power, and if he is interested in the subject upon which we are treating. He begins by saying that as the body unfortunately has sicknesses and needs a physician, so does the soul. Our Lord was the chief physician of souls, but "His disciples also, Peter and Paul, and the prophets are physicians, as well as all those who in the Church succeed the apostles, all these are physicians of souls."[2] He then goes on to treat of the miseries of the soul and their effects upon the spiritual life. In the second homily he comes to the remedies of these miseries or sins. If you have a stain upon your face, you wash, if a sore on your body, you try to get it healed. If you have evil humours in your eyes, you remove them lest blindness supervene. So should you do with the soul. Commenting on the words of the psalm: "I will declare my iniquity," he has this remarkable passage: "We often make this declaration of our iniquity, that is the confession of our sins. See what divine scripture teaches us, that we must not hide our sin within. For they, too, who are oppressed by undigested food or phlegm, if they eject it, are relieved; so they who have sinned, if they conceal and retain the sin within them, are oppressed within and almost suffocated by the phlegm or humour of sin; but if they become their own accusers, while they accuse themselves and confess, they at the same time both eject the sin and digest the whole cause of the disease. Only look diligently to whom thou oughtest to confess thy sin." In another place[3] the same writer says: "If we do this and confess our sins not only to God but to those also who can heal our wounds and sins, our sins will be blotted out by Him who saith: 'Behold I blot out as a cloud thy

[1] *De Pœnit.* xii. [2] Hom. 1 on Ps. xxxvii. [3] Hom. xvii in Luc.

iniquities.'" He also speaks of "Evil thoughts which were revealed, that by being brought out they might be destroyed, and *He* who died for us might slay them. For as long as they were hid it was impossible for them to be extirpated entirely."[1] St Ambrose, writing upon repentance, says: "If thou wilt be justified, confess thine offence. For humble confession looses the bonds of sin." St Augustine answers an objection often raised in our days. "Let no one say to himself: I do penance to God in private; I do it before God. Is it, then, in vain that Christ has said: 'Whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shalt be loosed in heaven'? Is it in vain that the keys have been given to the Church? Do we make void the Gospel? Void the words of Christ? Do we promise you what He denied you? Do we deceive you?"[2] St Gregory the Great wrote in the sixth century: "Why do you conceal your sins in the depths of your conscience? Let them come out through a good confession, that the pastors of the Church may relieve you, since you have not been ashamed to confess."[3] Our own English St Bede, in fine, writing in the eighth century, exclaims: "Let us discover to the priest the filth of the more grievous leprosy, and by his direction let us endeavour to cleanse the soul." And again: "If any one is sick in sin and shall confess to the priests of the Church, and shall in a good heart forsake his sins, they will be forgiven him."[4]

8. We have seen the teaching and the practice of the Catholic Church on the subject of confession. Catholics value and appreciate this sacrament of cleansing, this "second plank after shipwreck," as the Council of Trent aptly calls it, the first plank being baptism. Although the

[1] *De Pœnit.* ii, 6.

[2] Serm. 392, 3. See also *St Augustine's Sermons*, 47, 67, 98, 351, 352, in all of which the same doctrine is inculcated.

[3] Hom. xxvi, n. 6. [4] *In Ep. St Jacobi* v.

members of the Church are only bound, as we have said, to go to confession once a year—bound, that is under penalty of sin—it is the general practice to go oftener; many Catholics go frequently, some as often as once a week. They feel that they often incur the defilement of sin, and so need frequently to be cleansed from sin; they are often caught in Satan's snare, as the hare in the trap set in the long green grass, and as the fly in the spider's web, so they often go to be delivered from the meshes of sin; they are often bound, or bind themselves, in the chains which are forged by sin, and so they go often to Him who delivered Peter from his prison, to have their fetters broken. They believe that when they "show themselves to the priest" they are "made whole"; when they wash in the laver of penance they are cleansed; when they confess their sins "God is faithful and just to forgive" them. They believe that when the priest says "I absolve," God in heaven says "I absolve;" when the priest lifts up his consecrated hand, the pierced hand of Christ is raised over the penitent's head; and that, when the words of absolution, coming from the lips of the minister, fall upon his ear, the grace of pardon, coming with the Precious Blood from the Master's riven heart, is gently and sweetly poured upon the inmost soul. The words are clear and may not be gainsaid: "Whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven."

3. The Confessor

CONFESSION is one of the divinest of divine institutions, yet God uses the ministration of men in applying its power and its grace to souls. In the incarnation He united the divine and human natures in holy wedlock; in the sacred works which are the outcome of this fundamental mystery the human has ever been wedded to the divine. In the incarnation an angel-herald announces His coming, a virgin is preserved immaculate and "all fair," angels sing His welcome over the hills, and a star is His messenger to

the Eastern kings; and yet He becomes a man, nay, a child, He is "born of a woman," born in a stable, He lives in poverty, humility, lowliness and want. So in the works coming from the incarnation, greatness is allied to littleness, abject poverty to infinite wealth. Men preach, but they preach divine truths. They baptize, and though baptism makes the children of men children of God and heirs to their Father's kingdom, yet they use common water in so doing. They give to men a "Bread which comes from heaven;" but it is transubstantiated from the bread which is the food of the poor. The other sacraments are divine in their origin, their grace, their effects, their power; yet lowly and "beggarly" elements are made use of in the mysteries of grace. What more divine than to forgive sins? "No one can forgive sins but God alone." Surely then God will look up to heaven, and choose angels, or archangels, or seraphim, or cherubim to be the ministers of His will in giving the grace of this sacrament to men? No, He looks down to earth, and chooses its ministers from amongst men—men who are mortal like ourselves. "Every high priest is taken from amongst men, and is appointed for men . . . . that he may offer gifts and sacrifices; that he may compassionate with those who are in ignorance and error, because he is also compassed with infirmity. And as for the people so for himself has he to offer for sins."[1] The ear, the mind, the heart of a man are the channels through which sins have to pass from the heart of a creature to God. The mind, the will and the voice of that man are the messengers of God's grace and pardon to the soul: "Whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven." The office of a confessor is a sacred office, his relationship to the penitent who kneels at his feet is close, holy and near. He is the depository of the most secret and sacred of secrets, for to him are revealed the most

[1] Heb. v, 1.

hidden of sins. More than a friend! Greater than a father! The minister of God to the soul! God uses his hand to touch the soul, his voice to speak to it, his power and will to apply to it the fruits of redemption. St Basil wrote: "In the confession of sins the same method must be observed as in laying open the infirmities of the body. For as these are not rashly communicated to everybody, but to those only who understand how they may be cured, so the confession of sins must be made to such persons as have the power to apply a remedy" . . . . "*necessarily* our sins must be confessed to those to whom has been committed the dispensation of the mysteries of God."[1] "Impart your trouble to the priest as to your father," writes St Gregory of Nyssa, ". . . . open the secrets of your soul as if you were showing to a physician a hidden disorder; he will take care of your honour and your cure."[2] Origen again, in his homily on the 37th Psalm, from which we have already quoted, continues: "Only look diligently to whom thou oughtest to confess thy sin; prove first the physician to whom thou shouldst set forth the causes of thy sickness, who knoweth how to be weak with the weak, to weep with those who are weeping, who is trained in sympathy and compassion, that so thou mayest do and follow whatever counsel he may give, who shall first show himself a skilful and compassionate physician. If he perceive that thy sickness is such as ought to be published in the congregation of the whole Church,[3] that so others may be edified and thyself cured, this must be prescribed with much deliberation and on the very experienced advice of such a physician." Ecclesiasticus gave the same advice some centuries before in words which will, in these our days and

[1] *In Regul. Brev.*, interrog. 299, 288.

[2] Quoted by Cardinal Wiseman, lect. x, *The Catholic Church.*

[3] An allusion to public confession which prevailed when Origen wrote, in the 3rd century; it was abolished in the 5th century by Pope Leo the Great. *See page* 197.

in this our land, bear repetition: "Be not ashamed to confess thy sins; *but submit not thyself to every man for sin.*"[1]

It is not every man who has a right to forgive sin; only he who has received the power. It is not every man who is fit to exercise the office of confessor; only he who has been prepared for the divine work. As the stones of a building have to be cut and formed to rightness of size and shape, and as the members of society have to be educated each for his proper station and place, so must the minister of God be made ready for the divinest of divine work, as St Gregory calls it, the care of souls.

2. First of all he must be called, and called by God himself. "No man taketh this upon himself;" a vocation is necessary, a vocation which is divine. The master of the vineyard must hire the labourers, if his vines are not to be spoiled. The chief shepherd must engage the other shepherds, if the sheep are not to be left to the carelessness of hirelings, who will allow them to become the prey of wolves. He who said to the fishermen by the water-side: "Come after Me, and I will make you fishers of men," must repeat those words to His elect. He who struck Saul down, and then raised him up, and sent him to Ananias to be instructed in the ways of the Lord, must do the same by His ministers if they are to be true.

3. Then, when called, they must be formed and trained to the work of the ministry. In a college or a monastery they must be tried in virtue, tested in spiritual science, proved in good works, before they are ready for their work in the vineyard of the Master. A doctor, a lawyer, a man who is to be a scientist, an engineer, all must study for years before they can be proficient in their profession. So with the future priest. He must study philosophy to understand the working of the human mind, which he has to guide; dogmatic theology, that he himself may know

[1] Ecclus iv, 31.

the truths which he has to teach to others ; moral theology, which reveals to him the diseases of the soul and the remedies which he has to apply to their spiritual wounds ; canon law, which is the code of ecclesiastical discipline which regulates both the rulers and the ruled in the Church.

4. When he is formed and made ready he must be ordained, consecrated that is, and dedicated to the work of the ministry by a bishop who can trace his genealogy in the episcopate through other bishops, and through the supreme bishop of Christendom, to the first bishops to whom Christ said : " Whatsoever you shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven," and " Whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven " ; even as we track a river to its source, and the branch of a tree to the root from which it originally came and to which it still belongs. He must be united in bonds of true sympathy, common faith, genuine fraternity and practical obedience to the successor and heir of him to whom Christ said : " To thee do I give the keys of the kingdom of heaven," i.e., he must be in communion and subjection to the successor of St Peter, the Bishop of Rome, since it is only by the power of " the keys " that sin can be forgiven.

5. More than this, even though he be rightly, validly, canonically ordained, this is not enough. He must have jurisdiction given to him over a certain flock or certain members of the fold by the supreme shepherd. A priest is not the " the universal pastor," " the chief shepherd " ; he is only a minister of the chief, an under-shepherd depending upon the chief pastor who must allot to him his work, assign to him the part of the fold which he has to tend. A Catholic priest, although admitted by the Catholic Church and the Christian world to be a truly ordained priest, cannot, therefore, hear confessions where he will, he can only exercise his power in the place or in favour of the people to which and over whom he has been appointed by the head of the entire Church, through his bishop or superior. He

belongs to a diocese; outside that diocese, except in cases of extreme urgency, he cannot validly absolve without the sanction of the bishop of the diocese other than his own. Even though he holds jurisdiction immediately from the pope, unless it is otherwise distinctly stated, the pope insists that he should get the "approval" of the bishop for its use. A priest of the diocese of Birmingham could not hear confessions and give absolution in the diocese of Salford without the leave of the Bishop of Salford. This rule applies to the bishops themselves; the pope alone has universal jurisdiction; all others have only limited power. There is, after all, nothing strange in this legislation of the Church, it is found in every walk in life; the practice is universal. A governor of a colony, appointed by the king or queen, has quasi-royal privileges and powers in the colony over which he presides; in the neighbouring colony he is powerless. Why? In the one he has jurisdiction in the other none. A judge is always a judge, but he cannot always and everywhere act as a judge; only in special places, at stated times, in a given circuit or in appointed courts; outside this his actions and judgements would be illegal and invalid. Jurisdiction and no jurisdiction again. An officer in the army is an officer wherever he may be, but he can only rule as an officer over the particular regiment or in the particular district to which his commission, i.e., in ecclesiastical language his jurisdiction, extends. The manager of a branch bank is responsible in his own bank, but in another branch of the same banking firm he has no authority at all, no jurisdiction. The captain of a vessel may be always called "captain," but he may not embark on another boat and act the captain, even though the boat belongs to the company in whose employ he is; he lacks jurisdiction; his authority is limited to his own vessel. So with a priest. He is a governor, but only in his own province; a judge, but only of those who come to his court or are committed to his care; an officer, but not everywhere an acting officer; a captain,

but only ruling in his own vessel, elsewhere he lacks jurisdiction; therefore, elsewhere his action would be invalid and null.

6. These thoughts ought to put grave scruples into the minds of our Anglican friends, who affect to hear confessions and, what is worse, pretend to absolve from sins. When they wear vestments, or swing censers, or form processions, or burn candles, or turn to the east and from the west, or mix water with the wine, or put up stations of the cross and images of the saints in their churches, or hold "high celebrations" and "early communions," even fasting, we can afford to smile at the imitation and be amused at the unintentional flattery implied in the following out of what we do. But when it comes to deceiving people in so grave a matter as affecting to forgive sin for which they have neither power from God nor authority nor approval from the Church to which they nominally belong, it is no longer a matter for merriment but a serious scandal and a scandalous shame. "If the blind lead the blind," leader and led will "fall into the pit." Priests have to spend years of preparation for the sacred duty of confession. They are told that they are responsible to God for every absolution given or refused. They have to apply to themselves the warning words of the prophet, that if any soul is lost through their misguidance: "I will demand his blood at thy hands."[1] And yet here are men without study, without preparation, without training, without warrant, attempting to guide souls to heaven, to solve difficulties oftentimes most difficult for the learned to remove, to take away impediments on the way, and, above all, to pardon sin. If a man were to pose as a doctor without study or preparation or title; if another were to profess to practise as a lawyer who knew nothing about law, and had passed no examination on the subject; or if a third were to take charge of a vessel without knowledge of the rules of navi-

[1] Ezec. iii, 18.

gation, all three would justly, and most justly, be fined or put into prison. Yet this is what many are doing spiritually in England to-day.

There is another scandal no less grave. A priest must be "called" and he must be "ordained" before he can take upon himself "the ministry of reconciliation." We may justly ask and we may wait long for the reply: "Who called any one in the Anglican Church to hear confessions? Who ordained them for that purpose?" It is true that words are said in the ordination service which imply the giving of the power to forgive—words which, by a strange anomaly, have remained there from the days when confession prevailed in the Church in England, because then the Church in England was the Catholic Church. But if the bishop who says the words has no power to give what the words imply, the words are meaningless and vain. *Vox et præterea nihil.* For three hundred years what bishop of the Anglican establishment pretended to have the power, what bishop pretends to it to this day? What bishop ever did, what bishop ever does, what bishop in the Anglican Church could pretend to make an absolving priest? No intention, nothing given. The "keys" were given to Peter and to Peter's line, to which line they do not even profess to belong.

Even supposing for a moment—as we cannot *really* suppose—that power could be given, and were given, outside the apostolic fold, where do these men get the *jurisdiction* of which we have spoken, and which we claim to be *de rigeur?* Is each of them a pope? Is each a universal shepherd? Can each roam where he may, and act according to his own sweet will? The whole question bristles, not with difficulties only, but with absolute impediments; it is hemmed in by walls of brass and barriers of iron, which no one can break down. They are acting without authority, serving without commission, ruling without jurisdiction or power.

The Catholic priest is sure of what he does. He has been called, he has been proved, he has been trained, he has been ordained, he has received his "faculties" or jurisdiction from one who is commissioned by the supreme visible vicegerent of Christ to give such jurisdiction; and so he acts with confidence. There is no doubt, no hesitation. He, and they to whom he ministers, do not think, but *know*, that the words of Christ apply to him: "Whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven." The people do not hope, but believe that, as Naaman the leper, when he washed in the river at the bidding of the prophet, was made clean, and as scales fell from the eyes of Saul at the word of Jesus, so their sins fall from their souls at the word of his absolving power.

7. The confession is over, the sins are cleansed. One duty still remains to the confessor, and, if we except prayer, only one. What is that? To say nothing, to do nothing, to know nothing of the confession that is passed. The sins are buried at the foot of the cross, the memory of them is locked up in his solitary breast for ever. The law of the *sigillum*, or seal of confession, is clear, absolute and without remission. It is this: Under no possible circumstances, for no imaginable reason, not even to prevent grave evil, can he reveal to another, either pope, bishop, priest or layman, the sins that have been confessed to him, in the sacrament of penance. He receives his power from God through the pope; the pope could recall that power at any time that he willed; but as long as he has that power he exercises it, not as the minister of a bishop or a pope, but of Christ himself. To God only can he reveal that which is God's secret, and not his own. He would have to lose his reputation, suffer in his body, or give up his life, rather than allow the sacramental secret to be extorted from him. His heart must be, unlike the heart of the penitent, as an iron-bound coffer; his lips must be the reverse of the penitent's lips, they must be locked and sealed. Many

priests have gone to prison, some to death in vindication of the sacramental seal. The history of St John Nepomucene is familiar to every Catholic child. Even in our own times we have had martyrs for the confessional seal. In the year 1853 a priest at Oratov, in Russia, Koblowicz by name, esteemed for his piety and learning, was, to the astonishment of all who knew him, arrested on the charge of the murder, in a church, of a public official. The evidence against him was circumstantial—the finding of a revolver belonging to him behind the altar, and some other personal articles of his, dropped apparently in the hurry of escaping from the scene of the crime. He was degraded by the bishop, to the great sorrow of the people, and condemned by the state to penal servitude for life in the mines of Siberia. Twenty-five years after, i.e., in 1878, the organist of the church was on his death-bed, and sending for a notary, confessed that he had committed the crime, as he wished to marry the widow of the murdered man, and that he had thrown suspicion on the priest. After the priest's condemnation, he added, he was struck with remorse and, visiting the priest in prison, went to confession to him, and told him his sin. So that the priest not only knew that he himself was innocent, but knew who the real murderer was—but under the seal of confession. It was as though he knew it not. Every priest may make his own the words by some attributed to St Augustine: "Do not be afraid to confess your sins, my brethren; for of that which I know through confession I have less knowledge than of that of which I am ignorant."[1] When the author of the crime was discovered, the government gave orders for the priest's immediate release. . . . It was *too late*; he had died in the mines, died in the prison garb, died under the false accusation of foul murder, died like St John of Bohemia, a martyr for the seal of confession. In the last decade, in 1894, a priest in America was

[1] Inter Opp. Sti Aug. Serm. XXX. (Edit. Paris, 1837. Vol. VI, pag. 1882 in append.)

sentenced to imprisonment for having, as was supposed, robbed a dying banker, whom he attended as a priest, of a large sum of money. The money was missed, and was found in the priest's room. He only protested his innocence, and declared that he could say no more. The anti-Catholic papers made capital out of this incident, and wrote against priests and confession. Two years after, in 1896, a paper was found in the dead banker's writing stating that he had entrusted a sum of money, naming the sum found, to this priest to make restitution to a person named. The priest could not tell this without revealing that the penitent banker had been guilty of confessed fraud, to make restitution for which the money was entrusted to him. After this discovery he was released from prison.

These incidents are not rare in the history of the confessional, and they tend to exemplify what Catholics mean by "the seal." These two heroic priests did nothing more than their duty, nothing more than any confessor would be bound to do, under pain of sin, rather than reveal a secret committed to them under the sacred seal. The heart, the mind, the lips of the confessors must ever be "a closed garden and a fountain that is sealed." He is God's minister, and not merely the minister of man; the minister of Christ and the dispenser of the mysteries of God. "Here now amongst the ministers it is required that a man be found faithful."[1] The confessor's life must be summed up, if need be, in the words of the great apostle: "In all things let us exhibit ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in tribulation, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in prisons, in seditions, in labours, in watchings, in fastings, in chastity, in knowledge, in long suffering, in sweetness, in the Holy Ghost, in charity unfeigned, in the word of truth, in the power of God; by the armour of justice on the right hand and on the left; through honour and dishonour,

[1] 1 Cor. iv, 1.

through infamy and good name; as deceivers, and yet speaking truth; as unknown, and yet known; as dying, and behold we live; as chastised, and not killed; as sorrowful, and yet always rejoicing; as needy, yet enriching many; as having nothing, and possessed of all things. Our mouth is open to you, O ye Corinthians, our heart is enlarged."[1] Such are the characteristics of a good confessor as he is found in the Catholic Church.

4. The Penitent

MUCH depends upon the confessor in the sacrament of penance; more, much more, depends upon the penitent. The confessor is powerful with the power of God, but the penitent can render him powerless. Everything depends upon the dispositions of the one who would approach the sacrament of pardon. If the dews of heaven fall upon weeds instead of flowers, the weeds grow and not the flowers. If the sun shines upon cockle, cockle grows and not wheat or corn. The dispositions of the penitent must correspond to the qualifications of the confessor. The confessor is a father, the penitent must be as a child; the confessor is a judge, the penitent must be a voluntary accuser of his own crimes, and he must plead guilty to what he has done; the confessor is a physician, the penitent must make known his moral wounds. This is a great sacrament, and needs earnest, serious, thoughtful preparation, "lest the grace of God be received in vain." A man must "prove himself," and so receive. He must approach the sacred tribunal of mercy in the spirit of Magdalen, of Peter, of the prodigal, in sorrow, in repentance, in confidence, in love.

1. He must realize the sacredness of the work which he does. He goes to the priest not as to a man, but as to the minister of God. The priest does not kneel in the confessional, he sits as though in judgement. The penitent

[1] 2 Cor. vi, 4-11.

kneels with bowed head, in sorrow and self-condemnation. The very attitude denotes the first preparation of mind and will.

2. Prayer is another duty of the penitent; prayer for light: "Lord, that I may see." We do not know ourselves; nothing is so hidden from self as self; here then is our need of light from above.

3. Then comes the searching of the soul, the examination of conscience, the endeavour to discover his sins, that he may make them known, and submit them to the power of the keys.

4. Another part of the penitent's preparation is the most essential of all—sorrow or contrition for his sin. It is brought as an objection to the practice of confession, by those who see it from without, that it facilitates sin. We confess, and we can go and sin again; and then confess once more, and be forgiven once more. Quite the reverse. Confession acts as a deterrent from, certainly not as an incentive to sin. Every Catholic knows that it is in vain for him to go to confession unless he has contrition or sorrow for sin. He knows further that the sorrow necessarily implies a resolve to avoid, and not repeat, the sins which he has to confess. In vain would he have confessed his sin, if his confession had not been the outcome of sorrow. In vain would Magdalen have waited for the words, "Many sins are forgiven her," had she not washed the feet of Jesus with her tears. In vain would Peter have hoped for pardon, had he not gone out, and "wept bitterly" after his fall. Sorrow is the one indispensable and absolutely necessary condition for pardon. No priest, no bishop, no pope could forgive sin, if this sorrow be wanting in the heart. The priest might say: "I absolve," God would not ratify the absolution; the priest might say: "Thy sins are forgiven," God would say: "Thy sins remain." Contrition is vitally and essentially necessary, if grace is to come to the soul. And that contrition must include what we call "a firm

purpose of amendment"; a resolve, that is, by God's help not to go back to sin again, lest our last state be worse than the former. A relapse is more dangerous than the original malady, because the original malady has weakened the body, and taken from it much of its recuperative power, so that it is difficult to rise again. So in diseases of the soul.

5. When the child of God is sorry for having offended his Father, and asks his Father's merciful pardon, there is still another condition—the one of which we have treated—confession: open, frank, candid, straightforward confession. "I said I will confess against myself my injustices to the Lord, and Thou didst pardon the wickedness of my sin."[1] "Father, I have sinned before heaven and against Thee."[2] Such must be the spirit of the one who seeks for pardon. It is a stern, strict and stringent law that we must hold nothing back, that the confession must be integral and full, complete and entire, without excuse or palliation, without subterfuge or concealment. To hide anything wilfully, to hold back knowingly a grievous sin is a sacrilege, a profanation of the sacrament, the desecration of a sacred thing. It makes the sacrament a channel of death instead of a means of grace, it changes the rod into a serpent, and water into blood. We believe this to be one of the most heinous of sins, for the simple reason given by St Peter to Ananias and Saphira, that it is "a lie, not to man, but to the Holy Ghost."[3] "Receive ye the Holy Ghost; whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven." The priest does not hear confession as a man, but as a vicar, a minister of Christ. He pardons, not as a child of Adam, but by virtue of the grace and power of the Holy Ghost. Ananias and Saphira were stricken with death, and their bodies carried out to burial, as a warning, a terrible warning, to all who despise, not man, but the divine Spirit breathed into him, and the Son of God whose power he exercises, and in whose name

[1] Ps. xxxi, 5. [2] Luke xv, 18. [3] Acts v.

he absolves. Confession rightly made is to the penitent the tree of life; a sacrilegious confession is the source of bitterness and death. Hence Catholics look upon it as a sacred duty to prepare for confession, to make a true confession, to amend the life when the confession is made, to satisfy by penance for past sin, and to return, as far as may be, to a life of sinlessness, innocence and love. This is one of the effects of confession. "Oh, if thou didst but know the gift of God!" If those outside only knew what confession is to those within—a second Siloe, in which they are healed of the diseases of sin; a spiritual Jordan, in which they are cleansed from the foul leprosy of evil—they would not speak of it except with reverence and love. How many souls it has saved, how many it has prevented from falling, how many it has lifted up when they have fallen and set them on their way rejoicing, how many it has delivered from the very gates of hell, to how many it has opened the gates of heaven—all this we shall never know till the hidden things of darkness are brought to light, and "in Thy light [O God] we see light."

CHAPTER XX.

THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

1. The Doctrine

THE sacrament of the holy Eucharist, or, as it is styled *par excellence*, "the Blessed Sacrament," though not the first of the seven, is the greatest of the sacraments of the Church. St Thomas [1] gives a threefold reason for this; (1) because of what is contained in the sacrament, (2) because all the other sacraments lead up to and prepare the Christian for this one, (3) because they all have their perfection or consummation in the holy Eucharist. The Catholic doctrine of the holy Eucharist is expressed clearly and simply in the definition of the Council of Trent: "If any one shall say that, in this most holy sacrament of the Eucharist, there are not contained truly, really and substantially the Body and Blood, together with the soul and divinity, of our Lord Jesus Christ, and, consequently, Christ entirely, but shall say that He is there only as in a sign or a figure or in power, let him be anathema." [2] In another place the council defines that "If any one shall deny the wonderful and singular changing of the whole substance of the bread into the Body and the whole substance of the wine into the Blood of our Lord, only the external appearances of bread and wine remaining, which changing the Catholic Church calls transubstantiation, let him be anathema." [3] Here we have the definition and explanation of two terms frequently used when speaking of this mystery—the real presence and transubstantiation. Transubstantiation takes place during the holy Mass, when the words, first used and consecrated by our Lord at the last supper, are repeated by the priest; and then, the change being effected, we have the real presence

[1] *Summa*, 3ª pars, lxv, 3. [2] Sess. xiii, can. 1. [3] Ibid. can. 2.

of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Savonarola, in his "Triumph of the Cross,"[1] summarizes clearly the Catholic teaching about this mystery; for we must remember always that it is a mystery, a mystery of faith on the part of man, a mystery of love on the part of God. "We believe and declare that under the appearances of bread, no matter how small they may be, is the Body of Christ whole and entire, and that also under the appearances of wine, even in the smallest drop, is the Blood of Christ whole and entire; and we believe that Jesus Christ, whole and entire, is at the same time in heaven. We say that the Body and Blood of Christ are present in the blessed Eucharist in virtue of the words of consecration, not because He comes there from somewhere else but because the substance is changed. By the power of the words by which transubstantiation takes place there is in the Eucharist the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ under the appearances of bread and wine, because that is the meaning of transubstantiation; but by natural concomitance there is also the soul and divinity." In his beautiful doctrinal and devotional rhythm, so full of faith, confidence and love, which begins, *Adoro te devote latens Deitas*, St Thomas Aquinas unfolds to us the mystery of faith, its hiddenness from bodily sense, its reality to the eye and ear of faith, its spiritual meaning, its pledge and promise of "the future glory which shall be revealed in us." The English translation is from the pen of the late Father Aylward, O.P.[2]

Thee prostrate I adore, the Deity that lies
Beneath these humble veils concealed from human eyes;
My heart doth wholly yield subjected to Thy sway,
For, contemplating Thee, it wholly faints away.

The sight, the touch, the taste in Thee are here deceived,
But by the ear alone this truth is safe believed;
I hold whate'er the Son of God hath said to me;
Than this blest word of Truth no word can truer be.

[1] Book III, xvii. [2] *Annus Sanctus*, page 187.

Upon the cross Thy Godhead only was concealed;
But here Thy manhood, too, doth lie as deeply veiled;
And, yet, in both these truths confessing my belief,
I pray, as prayed to Thee the poor repentant thief.

I see not with mine eyes Thy wounds as Thomas saw,
Yet own Thee for my God with equal love and awe;
Oh, grant me that my faith may ever firmer be,
That all my hope and love may still repose in Thee.

Memorial sweet, that shows the death of my dear Lord;
Thou living Bread, that life dost unto man afford;
Oh grant that this my soul may ever live on Thee,
That Thou mayst evermore its only sweetness be.

O mystic Pelican, Jesu, my loving Lord,
Cleanse me of my defilements in Thy Blood adored,
Whereof one only drop, in Thy sweet mercy spilt,
Would have the power to cleanse the world of all its guilt.

O Jesu, lying here concealed before mine eye,
I pray Thee grant me that for which I ceaseless sigh,
To see the vision clear of Thine unveilèd face,
Blest with the glories bright that fill Thy dwelling-place.

This is the expression of the Catholic Creed on the doctrine of the real presence, the manner of that presence, the effects of that presence upon the soul, and the philosophical and theological explanation of how that presence is effected, viz., by the change of substance or, as we call it, by transubstantiation. Nature has her own mysteries of transubstantiation, such as the change of the food we eat and drink into our body and blood, into muscle, sinew, flesh and bone; such, again, as the change of water running through the earth, and then through the pores of the vine into vine juice, and then by another process into wine. Miracles of transubstantiation have been performed, as when our Lord changed water into wine. But the transubstantiation in the holy Eucharist is not a mystery of nature, hardly even a miracle of grace, but a divine mystery, supernatural, depending entirely upon the

power and promise of God. For, although we like to think that God prepared the world for this blessed Eucharist by figures, types and shadows in the old law, although we look upon the sacrifice of bread and wine offered by Melchisedech, the high priest of Salem,[1] and the bread brought by the angel to Elias, in "the strength of which food he walked forty days and forty nights unto the mountain of God, Horeb,"[2] and the manna, "the bread which the Lord hath given,"[3] as foreshadowing the divine mystery of the Eucharist, "the living Bread which came down from heaven"; still, we proclaim it simply a mystery which we believe on the word of Jesus Christ, which we accept on His promise, before which we bow down our intellects, for He has "the words of eternal life."

I see not with mine eyes Thy wounds, as Thomas saw,
Yet own Thee for my God with equal love and awe.

And why?

I hold whate'er the Son of God hath said to me;
Than this blest word of Truth no word could truer be.

2. The Promise of Jesus Christ

1. "GOD the Son hath said to me." He promised this mystery, and He fulfilled His promise; and He foretold, and gave power for its perpetuation when He said: "Do this in commemoration of Me." The promise is recorded in the sixth chapter of St John's Gospel. He had just worked a miracle, by virtue of which He had multiplied bread in such sort that with five barley loaves He had fed five thousand people, and then, after all had eaten to satiety, twelve baskets of fragments remained. From this He takes occasion to lift up the minds and hopes of the people to a higher, a supernatural, a supersubstantial bread. "Labour not for the meat that perisheth but for the meat that endureth unto life everlasting, which the Son of man will give you." He then goes on to say what that meat is to be, and

[1] Gen. xiv, 18. [2] 3 Kings xix, 8. [3] Exod. xvi, 15.

He gives them the promise of the institution of the Blessed Sacrament :[1]

"I am that Bread of life.

"Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead.

"This is the Bread which cometh down from heaven that a man may eat thereof, and not die.

"I am the living Bread which came down from heaven : if any man eat of this Bread he shall live for ever : and the Bread that I will give is My Flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.

"The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying : How can this man give us His Flesh to eat ? '

This is what people ask nowadays : "How can it be ?" They measure God's power by their own powerlessness, forgetting that "with God all things are possible." He does not explain in answer that He only means it figuratively, and not as a "real presence." He simply adds in stronger language that so it is, and that so it must be :

"Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the Flesh of the Son of man, and drink His Blood, ye have no life in you.

"Whoso eateth My Flesh, and drinketh My Blood, hath eternal life ; and I will raise him up at the last day.

"For My Flesh is meat indeed, and My Blood is drink indeed.

"He that eateth My Flesh and drinketh My Blood, dwelleth in Me, and I in him.

"As the living Father hath sent Me, and I live by the Father : so he that eateth Me, even he shall live by Me.

"This is that Bread which came down from heaven : not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead : he that eateth of this Bread shall live for ever.

[1] John vi. That the argument may come home to non-Catholics, the scripture texts in this chapter are quoted from the Protestant version of the bible.

"These things said He in the synagogue, as He taught in Capharnaum.

"Many therefore of His disciples, when they had heard this, said, This is an hard saying; who can hear it?

"When Jesus knew in Himself that His disciples murmured at it He said unto them, Doth this offend you?

"What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where He was before?

"It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.

"But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not and who should betray Him.

"And He said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto Me except it were given unto him of My Father.

"From that time many of His disciples went back, and walked no more with Him." If our Lord had not meant this truly and really, He would have called them back and explained that the word was spoken in a figurative or metaphorical sense. But no! He let them go. And then He appealed to His apostles, and told them that if *they* could not, or would not believe this mystery, they too might go, for they could not be His, nor followers of Him, unless they believed His word. "Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will you also go away?" These words provoked an act of sublime faith from Peter, who spoke in the name of all the rest, words which Catholics in the spirit of the same faith re-echo to-day: "Then Simon Peter answered Him, Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that Thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God."

2. In the words just given we have a clear and definite promise, given to us by Him whose "word passeth not

away," that He will give us His Flesh to eat under the form of bread, that He will give us "living Bread which came down from heaven." If He did not fulfil that promise, as some incredulous Christians maintain, it must have been from one of three reasons: either (1) He did not mean what He said; or (2) He did not intend to keep His word and to realize the expectations to which He had given birth; or (3) having made the promise, He was unable to carry it out. Let us examine each of these hypotheses separately, and see whether they can be seriously maintained. (1) That our Lord did not mean the words literally, but only used them as a figure of speech, is a gratuitous assertion which may be gratuitously denied, unless it can be proved from the context. It cannot; the context proves the very reverse, for all along it propounds the same doctrine of real presence, and not, as some would have it, real absence, and only figurative or symbolical presence. If the word of God's promise had only been the pledge of a spiritual presence, when the men of Capharnaum and "many of His disciples" took it literally, and because the mystery was beyond their comprehension—"the saying a hard one," as they expressed it, and on account of it "went back, and walked with Him no more," left Him and His, that is, because of the incomprehensibility of the revelation He had propounded—would He not have explained that He did not intend "the saying" literally, but only spiritually, metaphorically, or figuratively? Would He not have called them back, and have told them that they had misunderstood His meaning? He did not. On the contrary He repeated the promise. He confirmed what He had said by promising a miracle which should be a proof of the truth of His pledge, and should strengthen their faith in His word. "What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where He was before?" "Will you believe it then, convinced of My almightiness, by this further mystery of power, My ascension into the kingdom

of My Father?" He let them go away, under the impression that He had promised a real presence. More than that, He told the apostles that they too might go if they could not, or would not bow before this mystery of faith and love: "Will you also go away?" As much as to say: "If you do not believe, you may go, for this is an article of My creed." Then comes Peter's sublime confession and glorious profession of faith: "Lord, to whom shall we go, if we leave Thee? For thou hast the words of eternal life."

On other occasions Jesus Christ had "spoken in parables" and figures, but invariably He had explained His words as being figurative. "I am the Vine,"[1] He said; but to show that it was only a metaphor, He added: "As the branch cannot bring forth fruit unless it remain in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me"; in this sense did He compare Himself to a vine. "I am a door," He said on another occasion, but in the same breath He made His meaning clear: "If any one enter by Me, he shall be saved; and he shall go in and out, and shall find pastures."[2] "I am the good Shepherd"[3]; but why? and how? "The good shepherd giveth his life for his sheep." Lazarus was dead, and He said: "Lazarus our friend sleepeth"[4]; they misunderstood Him: "Lord, if he sleepeth he will do well;" He explained at once: "Lazarus is dead." "Unless a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God,"[5] He said figuratively; Nicodemus took it literally, and was puzzled: "How can a man be born again when he is old?" Jesus explains: "Unless a man be born again *of water and the Holy Ghost*, he cannot enter the kingdom of heaven." But when He says: "I am the living Bread," and "Unless you eat of the Flesh of the Son of man," and "My Flesh is meat indeed," and they under-

[1] John xxi, 5. [2] John x, 9. [3] Ibid. 11. [4] John xi, 11.
[5] John iii, 3 et seq.

stand Him literally, and say: "How can this be?" no explanation is forthcoming, simply a solemn asseveration: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, unless you eat of the Flesh of the Son of man . . . . you shall have no life in you." They go away; still no explanation. He means it literally, really, truly; there is nothing to explain.

(2) His words were spoken in a real, not a figurative, sense. He meant what he said to be understood as He said it, without cavilling, questioning, explaining or doubting. If He had not meant it He would not have said it; had He meant it in any but a literal and actual sense, He would, as on other occasions, have explained the sense in which these words were used. Can we imagine for a moment that He who was "the Way" would have said words which for thousands of years, as He foresaw, would lead men astray into wrong paths? that He who was "the Truth" would have proclaimed a doctrine which He, who knew the future, could have clearly foreseen would be a "stumbling-block" and a "rock of scandal" to millions of holy and well-intentioned men, earnest seekers after truth, men of mind and learning, men of piety and holiness of life? that He who was, and is, essentially "the Life," would have led men into the ways of death, into idolatry, deceit and deception? Or is it possible to suppose that for sixteen centuries the Church and the Church's children, always and everywhere, should have been misled about His intention and His meaning; and that not till the sixteenth century His true mind and true meaning should have been revealed to a few men in a small corner of Christendom; to men, too, who were—I speak now of the leaders of the sects—publicly and notoriously known as being, to say the least, not of irreproachable character; to men who, from their own showing and the evidence of their contemporaries, were not men of virtue and sanctity and holiness of life? Strange that a Berengarius, a Luther, a Calvin, an Elizabeth, an Edward

the Sixth, a Cranmer, *et id genus omne*, should have been the first to "know the mind of the Lord." We cannot, we do not believe it. We Catholics believe rather that our Lord knew what He said, and said what He meant; and that our Catholic fathers for nineteen centuries have been walking in the right "way," listening to the eternal "Truth," and that they have been vivified and upheld in their faith by Him who is "Life."

(3) The third hypothesis which we have suggested as an alternative, viz., that saying the words and meaning them, our Lord *could not* fulfil them, is absolutely and eternally untenable. It implies blasphemy, and the denial of God's almighty power. "With God all things are possible," even things unintelligible to men. He could, in the beginning, out of dust form the body of a man, and out of the rib of the man so formed, build up the body of a woman, and breathe, into one and the other, the breath of life, making them living things.[1] He could create the world by a word of power, saying: "Let there be light"; "Let the water be separated from the dry land"; "Let the earth bring forth the green thing"; "Let there be lights made in the firmament of heaven"[2]—and so make heaven and earth and sea and land and sun and moon and stars. When He had made the earth he could destroy it, saving only one family to repeople it again. He could change a rod into a serpent and the serpent back into a rod. He could change water into blood and the blood into water once more.[4] He could rain down bread from heaven, and give living water from a hard dry rock.[5] He could change water into wine.[6] He could raise the dead to life. He could multiply five loaves so as to feed five thousand hungry people.[7] Where then is the difficulty in changing

[1] Gen. i, ii. [2] Gen. i. [3] Gen. vii. [4] Exod. vii, viii.
[5] Exod. xvi, xvii. [6] John ii. [7] John vi.

bread into His own Body; and wine, if He so wills, into His own Blood? Who is to limit His power? We cannot, we would not if we could. With Peter we exclaim: "Lord, to whom shall we go? for Thou hast the words of eternal life."

3. The Fulfilment of the Promise

If we would have a proof that our Lord could give us His Flesh to eat, what stronger evidence could we have than the fact that He did so? And if we would have evidence that He did so, what evidence could be more convincing than the testimony of the inspired evangelists recording the institution of the Blessed Sacrament as the fulfilment of His promise. The words speak for themselves, they need no comment; they are their own commentary; they speak, like the promise, not of a figure, a metaphor, a spiritual idea, but of a reality. That one word of two letters, "is," which is found in each of the Gospel records, and in St Paul's testimony as well, forms a treatise on the *Real Presence.* The scene is the supper chamber; the time, the most solemn hours of our Lord's life, the evening of His death; the occasion, the sublime one when He speaks to the apostolic college for the last time, when He makes His will, when He leaves them His last legacy of undying and ever-living love. The eye-and ear-witnesses tell us the rest, and their words are beyond dispute.

St Matthew's Testimony.[1]

"And as they were eating Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said. Take, eat; This is My Body.

"And He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying: Drink ye all of it. For This is My Blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."

[1] Matt. xxvi.

St Mark's Account.[1]

"And as they did eat, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake it, and gave to them, and said: Take, eat; this is My Body.

"And He took the cup, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them; and they all drank of it.

"And He said unto them: This is My Blood of the new testament, which is shed for many."

St Luke's Version.[2]

"And He took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying: This is My Body, which is given for you: this do in remembrance of Me.

"Likewise also the cup after supper, saying: This cup is the new testament in My Blood, which is shed for you."

St Paul's Evidence.

St Paul, after our Lord's resurrection, and his own conversion, "received" a full account of this solemn ceremony and of the divine legacy. His relation of it is identical with the account given by the evangelist St Luke, from whom undoubtedly or from other eyewitnesses, as well as by divine revelation, he had heard it. Here are his words:[3]

"For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus the same night in which He was betrayed took bread;

"And when He had given thanks, He brake it, and said: Take, eat; this is My Body, which is broken for you; this do in remembrance of Me.

"After the same manner also He took the cup, when He had supped, saying: This cup is the new testament in My Blood; this do ye, as oft as ye drink It, in remembrance of Me.

"For as often as ye eat this Bread, and drink this Cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till He come.

"Wherefore whosoever shall eat this Bread, and drink

[1] Mark xiv. [2] Luke xxii. [3] 1 Cor. xi.

this Cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord.

"But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that Bread, and drink of that Cup.

"For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's Body."

If words have any meaning, surely here we have our Lord's doctrine of the real presence—the "IS," the actual existence, in the Blessed Sacrament. Only one natural conclusion can be drawn from the words—every other interpretation is strained, unnatural and far-fetched—that is the interpretation given to the words by Tertullian, in terse but clear language: "TAKING BREAD HE MADE IT HIS BODY."[1]

Nor was this to be the act of one night; a gift that was to pass away. It was to be a legacy, it was to endure, it was to go down, with His Church, to the end of time. "Do this in commemoration of Me," was the commission to His apostles and their lineal descendants in the priesthood, to perpetuate the mystery to all time. Divine words are *effective*. In saying the words and giving the commission, He *ipso facto* conveyed the power to carry out the commission given. The apostles so believed; the early fathers of the Church so taught; in the middle ages the doctrine was the very spiritual life of the Church; in all times, to our own days, the Church throughout the world, and through all the ages of the Christian era—if we except a mere handful of Christians in narrow corners of the earth, and within the last three centuries—have said with the apostles: "We have received from the Lord that which we have delivered to you." The real presence has been the life of the Christian Church.

[1] *Advers. Marc.* iv, 40.

4. Faith of the Church in the Blessed Sacrament

1. For our purpose in showing, as briefly as we can, that the faith of the Catholic Church in this mystery has been the faith of all ages, we may divide the Christian world into four epochs or periods of time: (1) The apostolic age; (2) the early ages immediately succeeding the apostolic age; (3) the middle ages; and (4) the present times in which we live. In all these the Catholic doctrine of the divine and actual Presence, has been the very life-blood of the Christian Church. Testimonies superabound. Our difficulty is not to find evidence, but out of the vast mass of evidence to select merely a few testimonies as *criteria*, by which to judge of the spirit and faith of the time.

(1) In the *apostolic times* we naturally look to apostolic writings to find the true belief of those days. We have read the evidence of Saints Matthew, Mark and Luke, we now return to St Paul. We have already given his testimony of the institution of the mystery. In his concluding words, no one can doubt his faith in the reality of the divine Presence. Words could hardly be more decisive. "He that eateth and drinketh unworthily eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, *not discerning the Body of the Lord*." How could he "discern" the Body of the Lord, if the Body of the Lord were not there? How could we imagine a man incurring the penalty of "damnation" for not assisting worthily at a mere ceremony, for being in imperfect disposition when eating what was nothing more than mere bread, for taking part carelessly and thoughtlessly in a mere "commemoration"? The words are the apostle's sermon from the text, "This is My Body." He speaks in other places, and in words no less pungent and forcible. Writing to the Corinthians in the same chapter of the same letter or Epistle,[1] he insists upon the need of preparation for holy communion, and gives the reason why:

[1] 1 Cor. xi.

"Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that Bread and drink of that Wine. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, etc." And he gives as a reason for the spiritual infirmities of some of the Corinthian Christians that they do not receive worthily and prepare conscientiously for the divine mystery: "Therefore there are many infirm and weak among you, and many sleep." He had already asked them emphatically in a former chapter,[1] as though the question of the real presence were beyond the shadow of doubt: "I speak as to wise men; judge ye what I say. The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the *Blood of Christ?* The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the *Body of Christ?* For we being many are one bread, and one body; for we are all partakers of that one Bread."

(2) When we pass from the apostles to their successors we cannot if we would, and we would not if we could, lose sight of the doctrine of the blessed Eucharist. St Ignatius the martyr, a disciple of the Evangelist St John, has a strong and clear passage, which shows the apostolic tradition in the, as yet, infant Church. He is writing against a sect of early heretics, who are known as the *Docetæ*, whose error consisted in the denial of the reality of our Lord's Body in the flesh, and he goes on to say that that is why they approach not to holy communion: "they abstained from the Eucharist and prayer, because they do not confess that the Eucharist is *the Flesh of our Saviour Jesus Christ.* The Flesh which suffered for our sins. . . . They, therefore, who deny the gift of God, perish in their disputing."[2] St Justin lived in the second century, by which time the doctrine of the apostles could hardly have become "corrupt." He wrote as a Catholic apologist might write to-day. He describes the Church service as a

[1] 1 Cor. x, 15. [2] *Ep. ad Smyrn.* vii.

Catholic writer on ritual might report of it in our time. "Our prayers being finished, we embrace each other with a kiss of peace.[1] Then to him who presides over the brethren is offered bread, and wine tempered with water;[2] having received which, he gives glory to the Father of all things, in the name of the Son and the Holy Ghost, and returns thanks, in many prayers, that he has been made worthy of these gifts. This food we call the Eucharist, of which they alone are allowed to partake who believe the doctrines taught by us, and have been regenerated by water for the remission of sin, and who live as Christ ordained. Nor do we take these gifts as common bread and common drink; but as Jesus Christ our Saviour, made man by the word of God, took Flesh and Blood for our salvation. In the same manner, we have been taught that the food which has been blessed by the words which He spoke, and by which our blood and flesh in the change are nourished, *is the Flesh and Blood of that Jesus incarnate.*"[3] St Irenæus bears the same testimony in the same century. He speaks of the "mingled cup," and the "created bread," and says that the Eucharist *becomes Christ's Body and Blood* and that we are nourished by the *Body and Blood of the Lord.*[4] St Cyril of Jerusalem—who wrote eighteen catechetical lectures to catechumens, and two mystagogical lectures for the benefit of the recently baptized, probably about A.D. 347, the former of which have been translated by the Anglican compilers of "The Library of the Fathers"—could not have taught his neophytes in more explicit terms the doctrine defined by the Council of Trent thirteen centuries later, and still taught by the Catholic Church to this day. In the twenty-second of his Catechetical lectures, he treats of the subject, taking for his

[1] A ceremony still to be witnessed at a High Mass.

[2] This mixing of a little water is still practised in the Catholic Church.

[3] *In Apol.* II. [4] *Advers. Hæres.*, lib. V, ii.

texts the words of St Paul, already quoted: "I have received of the Lord," etc. He asks, "Since, then, He Himself has declared and said of the bread: '*This is My Body*,' who shall dare to doubt any longer? and since He has affirmed and said, '*This is My Blood*,' who shall ever hesitate saying that It is *not* His Blood? He once changed water into wine, in Cana of Galilee, at His own will, and is it incredible that He should have turned wine into blood? . . . . Therefore, with fullest assurance, let us partake as of the Body and Blood of Christ; for in the figure of bread is given to thee *His Body*, and in the figure of wine *His Blood*; that thou, by partaking of the Body and Blood of Christ, mightest be made of the same body and the same blood with Him. For thus we come to bear Christ in us, because His Body and Blood are diffused through our members, so that, according to the saying of the Blessed Peter, we become partakers of the divine nature. . . . . Contemplate, therefore, the bread and wine not as bare elements, for they are, according to the Lord's declaration, THE BODY AND BLOOD OF CHRIST. . . . Judge not the matter from taste, but from faith; be fully assured, without misgiving, that thou hast been vouchsafed *the Body and Blood of Christ*. . . . That which seems bread is not bread, though bread by taste, but *the Body of Christ*; and that which seems wine is *not* wine, though the taste will have it so, but THE BLOOD OF CHRIST."[1] Compare these words with the words given in the translation of the hymn already quoted, compare them with the words of any Catholic book or any Catholic sermon written or preached within the present year, and you have an object lesson in "continuity" of doctrine in the Catholic Church. St John Chrysostom's "golden words" have the same genuine ring of the same Catholic belief in the real presence: "Let us touch the hem of His garment," he cries out in one of his

[1] *Catech.*, lect. xxii, n. 1, 2, 3, 6, 9 (Library of the Fathers).

homilies;[1] "rather, if we be so disposed, let us possess Him entire. For His Body now lies before us, not to be touched only, but to be eaten, and to satiate us. And if they who touched His garment drew so much virtue from it, how much more shall we draw who possess Him whole? . . . . Believe, therefore, that the supper at which He sat is now celebrated; for there is no difference between the two. *This* is not performed by a man and *that* by Christ. *Both* are by Him. When, therefore, thou seest the priest presenting *the Body* to thee, think not that it is his hand, but the hand of Christ that is stretched towards thee." In another homily[2] he repeats St Cyril's warning about approaching the mystery with faith: "Let us believe God in everything, and not gainsay Him, although what is said may seem contrary to our reason and our sight. Let His word overcome both . . . . for His word cannot deceive, but our sense is very easily deceived. That never fails; this very often fails. Since then His word says "This is My Body," let us assert, and believe, and view it with the eyes of our understanding." In many other places he speaks in the same strain, and bears undeniable evidence to the faith of the Church in the fifth century, in which he lived and preached so eloquently and yet so simply—eloquently because simply, and simply because eloquently—to his beloved people of Antioch.

(3) It would be as difficult as it is unnecessary to select testimonies to the "continuity" of this teaching in the middle ages. No one denies it; no one can doubt it. All the writers who treat of the subject at all are unanimous in professing the same belief. St Bernard of Cluny, St Bonaventure, St Dominic, St Francis, St Lewis of France, St Antony of Padua, and the numberless saints of those days are as "a cloud of witnesses" to the doctrine; their names are intimately associated with—their lives are

[1] Hom. 50 in Matt. xiv. [2] Hom. 82 (al. 83) in Matt. xxvi.

redolent of—the sanctuary, the altar, the blessed Sacrament. St Thomas Aquinas wrote learnedly and beautifully about all the mysteries of revealed religion, but upon none more beautifully than upon this central mystery of Catholic worship. He seemed incapable of saying all he would in plain, simple prose; he sang the faith of the Church and the praises of the Blessed Sacrament in verse. The "Adoro te devote," the "Lauda Sion Salvatorem," the "Pange lingua gloriosa," with its concluding verses, "Tantum ergo Sacramentum," which form part of the Benediction service of the Church; the office of the Blessed Sacrament, with its responses, antiphons and hymns, which, at the desire of Pope Urban IV, he composed for the feast of Corpus Christi—all these bear witness at once to his faith, his love and devotion, together with the faith, love and devotion of the Church to the mystery of the Blessed Sacrament. That mystery was the one centre of devotion in the middle ages, the one object of Catholic worship and love. The magnificent cathedrals and collegiate chapels and parochial churches, raised with such incomparable skill and inimitable gracefulness and splendour in these ages of faith, are "sermons in stone," preaching from the texts: "This is the living Bread come down from heaven," "This is My Body," "Do this in commemoration of Me."

(4) Still less needful is it to refer to the faith of Catholics at the present day. We have only to open our eyes and we see it, we have only to open our ears and we hear of it, in every land, in every tongue, "in season and out of season," in Catholic countries and in countries where the faith is under a ban. It is our glory, our proud profession; it is an uncompromising article of our Catholic Creed. Every day and in every tongue the cry goes up from millions of Catholic hearts and millions of Catholic lips: "Blessed be Jesus in the most Holy Sacrament of the altar."

2. This faith which is the soul of Catholic life in the Western Church, is in like manner the vivifying principle in

the worship of the Eastern Churches. Some of the words we have cited were spoken or written in the East. A reference to the liturgies or rituals of the Eastern Churches, both those which are united to the Roman centre and those which are separated by schism, will clearly show the belief in the Blessed Sacrament as firm and unbending as it is with us in the West. The ancient liturgies are full of professions of this faith. The liturgy of St Mark, which is exceedingly beautiful and devotional, after bidding the people to "pray for the pope and the bishop" and after offering prayer for "all orthodox bishops, priests, deacons, subdeacons, readers, singers and laymen, with the whole fulness of Thy holy and one Catholic Church," and after pleading for the dead, "Grant rest to their souls, and vouchsafe to them the kingdom of heaven," instructs the priest to offer incense. The words of the institution of the Blessed Sacrament—"the words of consecration," as they are called by Catholics—are then said by the priest, with a prayer: "Make this Bread *the Body*, and this Cup *the Blood* of the New Testament, of our very Lord and God and Saviour and universal King, Jesus Christ." The priest then offers up a prayer: "That we may worthily participate in the good things that are set before us, the *spotless Body and precious Blood of Thine only-begotten Son, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.*" The liturgy of St James prescribes the incense, the kiss of peace, rites and ceremonies, bowing down and blessings, prayers "for them that lead their lives in virginity and purity and ascetism and in venerable marriage"; the "preface" and the "Sanctus," as in our Mass, are read or sung; then the words of consecration, as they are written in the Gospel, are said, followed by a prayer that "He may hallow and make this Bread *the holy Body of Christ* . . . . and this Cup *the precious Blood of Thy Christ*"; mention is made of "the unbloody Sacrifice"; the "Our Father" is said by people and priest; the priest, dipping the Host into the chalice, says: "The union

of the most holy Body and precious Blood of our Lord and God and Saviour Jesus Christ"; and thanks are given "that Thou hast vouchsafed to make us partakers of *Thy Body and Blood* for the remission of sins and eternal life." The "Divine liturgy of St Clement" speaks of "vestments," "signing with the cross," of "priests, deacons and subdeacons"; it makes the bishop, who is celebrating the divine mysteries, repeat the scriptural words of consecration; and when he gives communion he simply says: "*The Body of Christ*," and the deacon answers: "Amen." The deacon holds the chalice, and says: "*The Blood of Christ*, the Cup of Life," and the one who receives answers: "Amen." The liturgy of St Chrysostom prescribes the "censing of the holy table," "prayer for the living and the dead," the "holy elevation of the holy Bread," and the priest receiving communion is told to say: "The *blessed and most holy Body of our Lord and God and Saviour Jesus Christ* is communicated to me for the remission of my sins and for everlasting life." The same expressions occur in St Basil's liturgy, and indeed in all the ancient liturgies of the Eastern Churches as well as of the Western Church. The doctrine of the real presence is the creed not of the Western Church alone, but of the Eastern Churches to-day.

3. How strange the transition from the early fathers and the liturgies of the earliest centuries to the liturgies of the Protestant churches of these last three centuries! It is as though we had suddenly been translated from the tropics to the north pole. After reading the words of faith how strangely the words of unbelief fall upon our ears: "Transubstantiation, or the change of the bread and wine in the supper of the Lord, cannot be proved by holy writ; but it is repugnant to the plain word of scripture, overthroweth the nature of a sacrament, and hath given occasion to many superstitions. The Body of Christ is given, taken and eaten *only after a heavenly and spiritual manner*. And the means whereby the Body of Christ is received and eaten in the supper is *faith*. The sacrament of the

Lord's Supper was not by Christ's ordinance, reserved, carried about, lifted up, or *worshipped*."[1] This article of the Protestant creed contradicts every passage that we have hitherto read. For sixteen hundred years every one had been wrong; this "new doctrine" is to put every one right. God left His Church for sixteen hundred years, and then, a the bidding of the so-called "reformers," came back again! It is true that in the early stages of the so-called Reformation the doctrine of the real presence was preserved. Its rejection was a gradual process. In his exhaustive book on "Edward VI and the Book of Common Prayer," the learned Benedictine, Abbot Gasquet, shows the gradual process, and then the entire rejection of the doctrine which had been the faith of Christendom, from the beginning down to this upheaval. But once rejected, it was rejected with a vengeance. Altars were removed to show that there was no sacrifice. Vestments were proscribed to emphasize the abolition of a sacrificing priesthood. Lights were forbidden because they would have no divine presence. The Light of the sanctuary had gone, and the lights upon the table, which supplanted the altar, were consequently extinguished. It was a total eclipse. No half measures. The 28th article was a reality. The doctrine was most effectually and effectively abolished from the Protestant creed. Luther and Calvin clung to the shadow of a presence, but the Anglican Church repudiated every shred of the ancient belief. Every trace of the power or office of a *sacrificing* priesthood was obliterated from the form and manner of ordering Priests," as may be seen in the Book of Common Prayer. No claim was, or is, made to any such power. There was, and is, no *pretence* even of appointing to the office. No word of the bishop implied, or implies, any pretension to either the possession or the giving of authority to offer sacrifice. Even in the "Ordering of Bishops," no sacrificial power is either given to, or is presupposed in, the candidate for the episcopate. The rite disappeared, and with it the doctrine of which the rite was a

[1] Article xxviii.

symbol and an outward profession. "If so great a gift be given, it must have a rite. I add if it has a rite, it must have a *custos* of the rite. Who is the *custos* of the Anglican Eucharist? The Anglican clergy? Could I, without distressing or offending an Anglican, describe what sort of *custodes* they have been and are to the Eucharist? 'O bone custos,' in the words of the poet, 'cui commendavi filium meum!' Is it not charitable towards the bulk of the Anglican clergy to hope that so great a treasure has not been given to their keeping? And would our Lord leave Himself for centuries in such hands?"[1] For three centuries they did not lay claim to the possession of the gift, and "the bulk of the Anglican clergy" do not to this day. It is true that a large section or party in "the Establishment" is coming back to the belief in the doctrine which we have traced through the ages, in the east and in the west; but though they may pretend to the belief, it is now only a shadow; the reality has gone. The divine presence is not in their supper of bread and wine. No "orders," no sacrificing priesthood; no sacrificing priesthood, no sacrifice; no sacrifice, no Eucharist. It has been the deliberate action of "the Church by law established in this land." They would have no Mass, no transubstantiation, no priests properly so-called. They lost the succession, and with the succession the sacrament departed as well. "The apostolic succession, its necessity and its grace, is not an Anglican tradition."[2] And without apostolic succession there cannot be—it is a contradiction in terms—an apostolic power. The history of the so-called Reformation in gospel language is this: "And behold the whole city came out to meet Jesus. And when they saw Him they besought Him to depart from their coasts. And entering a ship He passed over the water, and came into His own city."[3] The doctrine of the real and abiding presence, on the other hand, is, and always has been, and always must be, the very life and light of Catholic faith, Catholic love, and Catholic worship.

[1] Newman's *Essays Critical and Historical,* vol. II, p. 109.
[2] Ibid. [3] Matt. viii, ix.

4. Before ending this chapter we must say a word about the Catholic practice of communion under one kind. The Church holds that this is a matter not of divine command, but of Church discipline, which may be changed at the Church's will, as her prudence and wisdom may suggest, according to the circumstances of the time. When our Lord said, "Drink ye all of this," He was addressing not the entire Church, but the apostles, just as His words, "Do this in commemoration of Me," were spoken exclusively to them. In primitive times it appears to have been optional to the faithful to receive under one kind or under both. In the 5th century the Manichæan heretics, believing the use of wine to be sinful, refused the cup; in consequence of which, as a protest against the heresy, Pope Gelasius ordered all Christians to receive under both kinds. Gradually the old custom of either receiving or not under both kinds sprang up again. St Thomas, writing in the 13th century, says,[1] that because some are not careful, "wisely in some churches the precious Blood is not given to the people, but is only received by the priests." But in the year 1414 the Council of Constance made a general law that all were to communicate only under one kind, owing to the danger of spilling the precious Blood and the irreverence consequent upon accidents of this kind. From time to time, in individual cases, an exception has been made to this law; as at the solemn Mass sung by the sovereign pontiff, when the deacon and subdeacon communicate under both kinds. Any priest who has given holy communion to hundreds at a time, and any layman who has witnessed this ceremony, of such frequent occurrence in the Catholic Church will, with St Thomas, at once appreciate the wisdom and the prudence of the Church in restricting communion to one kind, as well as her deep and

[1] *Summa* iii, qu. lxxx, art. 12.

inherent reverence for the divine mystery of the Body and Blood of our Lord.

The practice of giving only under one kind rests upon the words of our Lord, and upon the teaching of the Church on the subject of what is known in theology as *concomitance*, i.e., the presence of our Lord's true Body and Blood under either species, whole and entire. This is expressed in the words of St Thomas which form part of the liturgy of the Church. They are translated from the "Lauda Sion, the sequence of the Mass on the feast of Corpus Christi:[1]

Concealed beneath the two-fold sign,
Meet symbols of the gifts divine,
There lie the mysteries adored:
The living Body is our food,
Our drink the ever-precious Blood;
In each one undivided Lord.

Not he that eateth it divides
The sacred food, which whole abides
Unbroken still, nor knows decay;
Be one or be a thousand fed
They eat alike that living Bread
Which, still received, ne'er wastes away.

The good, the guilty share therein,
With sure increase of grace or sin,
The ghostly life or ghostly death:
Death to the guilty; to the good
Immortal life. See how one food
Man's joy or woe accomplisheth.

We break the Sacrament; but bold
And firm thy faith shall keep its hold:
Deem not the whole doth more enfold
Than in the fractured part resides;
Deem not that Christ doth broken lie,
'Tis but the sign that meets the eye;
The hidden deep reality
In all its fulness still abides.

[1] Translation by Father Aylward, O.P.

Speaking to the apostles and instituting the priesthood, the divine High Priest said: "Drink ye all of This"; speaking to the laity, who were not priests, His language changes. He refers oftimes to the one species: "He that eateth Me, the same shall live by Me. . . . The Bread that I will give is My Flesh for the life of the world. If any man eat of this Bread he shall live for ever."[1] In St Luke's account of His being with the two disciples it is said: "It came to pass that, whilst He was at table with them, He took bread, and blessed, and brake, and gave to them; and their eyes were opened; and they knew Him."[2] Of the faithful in apostolical days it is recorded: "They were persevering in the doctrine of the apostles and in the communication of the breaking of bread."[3] St Paul writes: "We being many are one bread, one body, all that partake of one Bread."[4] For the Catholic the teaching of the Church is a sufficient warrant for the practice, for to him she is the "pillar and ground of truth," the divinely appointed teacher of the world.

5. In like manner the custom of receiving communion fasting is another point, not of divine faith, but of ecclesiastical law. The Chuch can change this law of her own making; she can modify it, or abrogate it, as she wills. It has no authority in scripture; it is a matter simply of discipline in the Church. The practice, nevertheless, is an ancient one. Tertullian tells us that in his day they received "the sacrament of the Eucharist at our meetings before daybreak."[5] St Augustine speaks of the custom in his time as as being universal.[6] St Chrysostom takes it for granted as a practice of the faithful: "But thou, before thou partakest, fastest, that in a certain way thou mayest appear worthy of the communion."[7] The third Council of Carthage made this a law.[8]

[1] John vi. [2] Luke xxiv, 30, 31. [3] Acts ii, 42.
[4] 1 Cor. x, 17. [5] *De Corona* iii. [6] *Ep. ad Januar.* LV, vi.
[7] Hom. xxvii. in 1 Cor. [8] Can. 29.

CHAPTER XXI

THE HOLY MASS

1. THE holy Eucharist is a sacrament. We call it, *par excellence*, *the* sacrament, or "the Blessed Sacrament." The Mass is a sacrifice; *the* sacrifice, the only sacrifice, of the Christian Church. It is during the sacrifice of the Mass that the mystery takes place by which the bread and wine are transubstantiated into the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ. This is the sacrifice, the offering of the bread and wine, and their being changed into the Blessed Sacrament. A sacrifice means an offering made to God and accepted by Him as a recognition of His supreme dominion over us. The offering made to God in the Mass is the offering of the divine Son, typified by the offering of Isaac by Abraham his father. Our Lord's word expresses this thought: "The Bread which I will *give* is My Flesh for the life of the world," [1] and again, "This is My Body, which is *given* for you." [2] The Council of Trent in three sentences summarizes the Catholic teaching on the subject of the Mass, telling us, first, that it is a sacrifice; secondly, that it is a continuation or renewing of the sacrifice of Calvary; thirdly, that it is a propitiatory sacrifice. "If any one shall say that in the Mass there is not offered a true and proper sacrifice, or that the offering simply means that Christ is given to us as our food, let him be anathema." [3] "In this divine sacrifice which is offered in the Mass that same Christ is contained and is offered without bloodshedding, who was once offered with bloodshedding on the altar of the cross." [4] "If any one shall affirm that the

[1] John vi, 52. [2] Luke xxii, 19.
[3] Sess. xxii, can. 1, *De Sac. Miss.* [4] Sess. xxii, can. 2.

sacrifice of the Mass is only one of praise and thanksgiving and a mere commemoration of the sacrifice offered on the cross; that it is not a sacrifice of propitiation; that it only benefits the receiver, and that it ought not to be offered for the living and the dead, for the pardon of sin, for the paying of penalties, or satisfaction and for other things needful to us, let him be anathema."[1]

2. Sacrifice has always been an essential act of true religion. Given a Creator and a reasoning creature, sacrifice follows as an instinct of the creature who depends upon the Creator; the acknowledgement of the dependence is an offering, a sacrifice. The sacrifices of Cain and of Abel; the bread and wine offered by Melchisedech, the high priest of Salem; Noe's altar and offering when he left the ark; the sin offerings, burnt offerings and holocausts ordained by God under the law of Moses—all evidence the same truth, all are the expression of the same instinct. The sacrifices of the old law, however, were only types and figures, "the shadows," as St Paul puts it, "of better things which were to come." The old law offerings were not of sufficient value to be accepted by God in atonement for sin, they only prefigured *the* sacrifice which was to take away the sins of the world. "It is impossible that with the blood of oxen and goats sin should be taken away. Therefore, coming into the world He [Jesus] saith: Sacrifice and oblations Thou wouldst not, but a body Thou hast fitted to Me. Holocausts for sin did not please Thee. Then said I: Behold I come to do Thy will, O God." Hence, "We are sanctified by the oblation of the Body of Jesus Christ once." And "He, offering one sacrifice for sins, for ever sitteth at the right hand of God."[2] This "one sacrifice," the sacrifice of Calvary, is the sacrifice of the Christian altar, offered again by Jesus Christ through the ministry of the Christian priesthood, the members of

[1] *De Sac. Miss.*, sess. xxiii, can. 3. [2] Heb. x, 4-12.

which are the "ministers of God and the dispensers of the mysteries of Christ."[1] "For as often as you shall eat this Bread and drink this Chalice you shall show the death of the Lord till He comes."[2] The Christian altar is "the table of the Lord."[3] It supplanted the Jewish altar: "We have an altar, whereof they have no power to eat who serve the tabernacle."[4] On that altar are placed the bread, which becomes "the Body of the Lord," and the "chalice of benediction," which contains "the Blood of the New Testament which was shed for the remission of sins." The Christian altar, the Christian priesthood and the Christian sacrifice are the realization of the forecast of Malachias. "I have no pleasure in you, saith the Lord of Hosts, I will not receive a gift from your hands."[5] He here speaks of the Jews and of their sacrifices. Then He reveals the Christian sacrifice which is to be when the sacrifice of Calvary has been offered, and we see the literal fulfilment of the words in the Catholic Church, in our own time and, indeed, in all times: "For from the rising of the sun to the setting thereof My name is great amongst the Gentiles, and in every place there is sacrifice, and there is offered to My name a clean oblation, for My name is great amongst the Gentiles, saith the Lord God of Hosts. In that day there shall be an altar of the Lord in the midst of the land of Egypt."

The first Mass, according to Catholic teaching, was offered by Jesus Christ in the supper chamber on the eve of His passion, in view of the sacrifice to be offered on the morrow—it was offered by anticipation. The apostles then received the power to consecrate, and to offer up the same holy sacrifice. "Do this in commemoration of Me," was their appointment to the office of a sacrificing priesthood. Every priest, rightly ordained by one of the successors of one of the apostles, who received that commission, offers sacrifice in Christ's name. That sacrifice is the perpetua-

[1] 1 Cor. iv, 1. [2] Ibid. xi, 26. [3] Ibid. x, 21.
[4] Heb. xiii, 10. [5] Mal. i, 10, 11.

tion of the sacrifice of Calvary. The altar is as the cross. The same divine Victim is upon that altar who was stretched upon the cross. The high priest, called by God a high priest according to the order of Melchisedech,[1] who offers the sacrifice is Jesus Christ present upon the altar, under the covering of the outward veils. The priest, visible to men, is the minister of the invisible High Priest, and in his hands Christ offers Himself: "Christ also hath loved us, and hath delivered Himself for us an oblation and a sacrifice to God for an odour of sweetness."[2] Everything in the ritual of the Mass has reference to the passion of Christ, and that death of which the Mass is the mystical renewal. There must be a crucifix upon the altar; the priest has frequently to make the sign of the cross. The words of the most solemn part of the Mass remind the celebrant of the great sacrifice with blood-shedding, of which the Mass is the continuation, as "a clean oblation." The very vestments, St Thomas reminds us,[3] all speak of the purity and sanctity which ought to characterize the priest who has to carry on and perpetuatethe sacrifice of the great High Priest. Savonarola, in the course of four sermons on "The ceremonies of the Mass" preached in the duomo of Florence, in the Advent of 1491, identifies many of them with scenes from the passion, and the vestments with the robe, the girdle, the white garment, the purple tunic worn by our Lord in the solemn hours of His sorrow.

3. The early Christian liturgies of both East and West, which were referred to in the last chapter, are all based upon this idea of the Mass being the commemoration of Calvary. The passion and death of Jesus Christ is the key which explains them all, their rites, their ceremonies, and the words which are said or sung. Such expressions as "Remembering His life-giving passion, His

[1] Heb. v, 10. [2] Eph. v, 2.
[3] *Suppl.* 3ª pars, qu. xi, art. 7.

salutary cross, His death and resurrection," "We offer up this tremendous and unbloody sacrifice," 'This memorial and sacrifice, this great, terrible, holy and wise mystery of the passion and death of Jesus Christ," are of frequent recurrence in them all. The same thought runs through the writings of the fathers; it seems that the more ancient the fathers, the nearer, that is to say, they were to the great sacrifice of the first Good Friday, the more impregnated were they with the idea of the Christian sacrifice of the Mass being identical with the sacrifice offered on the altar of the cross. St Irenæus quotes the prophecy of Malachias, which we have already cited, and appeals to the Mass as its fulfilment. "He took bread, and gave thanks, and said, 'This is My Body;'," and likewise the chalice, and proclaimed it (*confessus est*) His Blood, and taught that it was the new *oblation* of the New Testament; which the Church, receiving from the apostles, offers to God in the entire world."[1] St Cyprian writes to his "dearest brother," Cæcilius, to correct some "who, either through ignorance or simplicity, in consecrating and administering to the people the Cup of the Lord, do not the same as Jesus Christ, our Lord and God, the author and teacher of this *sacrifice*, did and taught." It appears that these Christians "either through simplicity or ignorance," had not used wine. St Cyprian goes on: "The cup which is offered in remembrance of Him, should be offered mixed with wine . . . . the Blood of Christ is not merely water, but wine. Nor can His Blood whereby we have been redeemed and quickened, appear to be in the cup when the cup is without that wine, whereby the Blood of Christ is set forth." He instances the sacrifice of Melchisedech, which "pre-figured the sacrifice of our Lord, and in which the high priest of Salem "offered bread and wine." So, he argues, must it be now. "For

[1] *Advers. Hæres.*, IV, xvii, 5

who is more a priest of the most high God, than our Lord Jesus Christ, who offered a sacrifice to God the Father, and offered that same which Melchisedech had offered, that is bread and wine, namely, His own Body and Blood?"[1] Mass, it would seem, was said daily in St Cyprian's time—he became a convert to Christianity A.D. 246—for, in a previous epistle,[2] he writes, alluding to the persecution then raging: "A more severe and fiercer struggle now hangs over us, to which the soldiers of Christ must prepare themselves by faith untainted, and by sturdy courage; considering that they, therefore, *daily* drink of the cup of the Blood of Christ, that they, too, may be able to shed their blood for Christ." In the last chapter of this book, reference was made to one of St Cyril's lectures on the real presence of our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament, and the faith of the Church in the fourth century. In it this article of the Christian Creed was shown, from the saint's words, to be beyond the shadow of a doubt what it is to-day. In the succeeding lecture[3] he instructs his neophytes on the subject we are treating of now, and his words are no less convincing. They clearly show the identity of the Church's teaching to-day with her teaching fifteen centuries ago. He describes the ceremonies of the Mass, and although the rite, in many ways, differs from the rite used in the Church at the present time, there are many points of similarity. The doctrine is identical with our own. The deacon gives the priest water to wash his hands, whilst he recites, as we do, the Psalm, "Lavabo inter innocentes manus meas." The *Pax*, or kiss of peace is given, as it is with us. They said, even as we say: "Sursum Corda: Lift up your hearts," and "Gratias Agamus: Let us give thanks to God." "After this we make mention of all the creation . . . . of angels, archangels, virtues," etc., to which our "Preface" corresponds. Then come the "Sanctus,"

[1] *Ep.* lxiii. [2] Ibid. xxiii. [3] Lect. xxiii.

thrice repeated, as with us. A prayer follows, "That He may make the bread the Body of Christ, and the wine the Blood of Christ." Now we come to what we call "the consecration": "then after the spiritual sacrifice is perfected the bloodless service upon that sacrifice of perpetuation, we entreat God," etc.; prayer for the living and the dead follows the consecration, as in the Mass in our time: "We entreat God for the common peace of the Church," etc. . . . "afterwards on behalf of the holy fathers and bishops who have fallen asleep among us, believing that it will be a very great advantage to the souls for whom the supplication is put up, while that holy and most awful sacrifice is presented." Then the "Pater" follows, as in our ritual to-day; after this the communion. "Then wait for the prayer," the saintly bishop says to his convert, "and give thanks to God, who hath accounted thee worthy of so great mysteries." . . . Truly Jerusalem and Rome and London are not far apart, nor is the twentieth century very distant from the fourth, if our criterion of time and place is to be the Catholic Creed. Compare with St Cyril's account of the Mass in the fourth century, the late Cardinal Newman's description of it in the nineteenth, and you must exclaim: "I cannot alter the word of the Lord my God, to speak either more or less!"[1] The words of the cardinal are from "Loss and Gain;"[2] they are supposed to be spoken by an Anglican convert to one who, not being a Catholic, thinks the Mass "a formal and unreasonable service":

"I declare, to me nothing is so consoling, so piercing, so thrilling, so overcoming, as the Mass, said as it is among us. I could attend Masses for ever, and not be tired. It is not a mere form of words, it is a great action, the greatest action that can be on earth. It is not the invocation merely, but, if I dare use the word, the evocation of the Eternal. He becomes present on the altar in flesh and

[1] Num. xxii, 8. [2] Page 290.

blood, before whom angels bow and devils tremble: that is that awful event which is the scope, and is the interpretation of every part of the solemnity. Words are necessary, but as means, not as ends; they are not merely addresses to the throne of grace, they are instruments of what is far higher, of consecration, of sacrifice. They hurry on as if impatient to fulfil their mission. Quickly they go, the whole is quick; for they are all parts of one integral action. Quickly they go; for they are awful words of sacrifice, they are a work too great to delay upon; as when it was said in the beginning, 'What thou doest do quickly.' Quickly they pass; for the Lord Jesus goes with them, as He passed along the lake in the days of His flesh, quickly calling first one and then another. Quickly they pass; because as the lightning, that shineth from one part of the heaven unto the other, so is the coming of the Son of man. Quickly they pass; for they are as the words of Moses when the Lord came down in the cloud, calling on the name of the Lord as He passed by, 'The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering and abundant in goodness and truth.' And as Moses on the mountain, so we, too, make haste, and bow our heads to the earth, and adore. So we, all around, each in his place, look out for the great advent, "waiting for the moving of the water." Each in his place with his own heart, with his own wants, with his own thoughts, with his own intention, with his own prayers, separate but concordant, watching what is going on, watching its progress, united in its consummation; not painfully and hopelessly following a hard form of prayer from beginning to end, but, like a concert of musical instruments, each different but concurring in a sweet harmony, we take our part with God's priest, supporting him, yet guided by him. There are little children there, and old men, and simple labourers, and students in seminaries, priests preparing for Mass, priests making their thanksgiving; there are innocent maidens, and there

are penitent sinners; but out of the many minds there rises one Eucharistic hymn, and the great action is the measure and the scope of it. . . . it is wonderful, quite wonderful."

4. The Mass is the Church's "sacrifice of praise," and her hymn of thanksgiving to God which has been continuously offered through the ages, from the rising to the setting of the sun, year in year out, since the eve of the first Good Friday. The only discordant note in that unceasing hymn, has been the one struck in Germany three hundred years ago, taken up in England, re-echoed in Switzerland, and emphasized by the pulling down of altars, the extinguishing of lamps and candles, the desecration of churches and cathedrals and chantries throughout the land. When Christianity was brought to England, the Mass was part of that Christianity, an article of the Church's creed. St Augustine said Mass in St Martin's church, Canterbury; Pope Gregory sent vestments to him by St Mellitus: "Sacred vessels, altar plate, and altar coverings, ornaments for the church, priestly and other clerical vestments, many relics of apostles and martyrs, and a quantity of books."[1] Mass was said throughout the land for a thousand years. Even Henry VIII bears witness to the continuity of the sacrifice of the Mass in England. In his last will and testament[2] he says: "We do instantly require and desire the blessed Virgin, His mother, with all the company of heaven to pray for us . . . . and that there be provided, ordained and set a convenient altar, honourably prepared and apparelled, with all manner of things necessary for *daily Mass*, there to be said perpetually while the world shall endure." That was the last chapter in the history of the Mass in the Established Church of England; and those words, though written earlier, were probably read

[1] Ven. Bede's *Hist.* I, xxvi et seq.
[2] Quoted in Dr Lee's *Edward VI*, p. 27.

when the new order of things had set in which contradicted the old order, and brought spiritual ruin and desolation where formerly, for a thousand years, there had been edification, unity and peace. The new era began with a new chapter, the beginning of the history of a new church, not of Christ's founding, but of kings' institution; and in that new chapter we read: "Wherefore the sacrifice of Masses, in the which it was commonly said that the priest did offer Christ for the quick and the dead, to have remission of pain or guilt, were blasphemous fables, and dangerous deceits."[1] That is the note of discord, destroying the harmony of more than fifteen hundred years. It *had*, as the reader will have seen, been "commonly said," and it is "commonly said" to-day throughout the world if we except a small insignificant corner, in every church if we except the Protestant Church, in every age if we except the last three, that the Mass is the true sacrifice of the new law, the true oblation of Christ's Body and Blood, mystically renewed. It was said in the supper chamber by Jesus Christ Himself, said in Jerusalem, at Ephesus, at Corinth, at Rome, by the apostles of Jesus Christ; said in the catacombs; said in the early and earliest ages; said through the centuries down to our own. It is being "said" again now, as an imitation, by many within the pale of the Anglican Church, though the Anglican Church, as a church, replies that such saying is "a blasphemous fable and a dangerous deceit." Our only answer to those who wrote and those who profess that thirtieth article is the reply given to some would-be "Reformers" sixteen hundred years before their day: "Jesus I know, and Paul I know, but who are you?"[2]

5. Because the Mass is the supreme act of worship in the Catholic Church, the one only sacrifice of the new law, therefore are all Catholics bound, under pain of grievous sin, to assist at that sacrifice, on Sundays at least and

[1] Article xxx. [2] Acts xix, 15.

certain feast-days, which are, in consequence, termed days or "holidays of obligation." The obligation being that imposed by the Church, Catholics have, unless prevented by grave inconvenience or actual impossibility, physical or moral, to hear Mass and to rest from unnecessary servile or laborious work. The resting from work is prescribed, that they may have time to "think of the things of God"; the hearing of Mass is ordered for the reason given, because it is the supreme act of supreme worship of God on earth. There is a divine law commanding that one day of the week should be kept holy. The Church law, as the development of the divine law, prescribes the manner and means of keeping the day holy. The two obligations set forth in the commandments of the Church, satisfy the letter of the law; the spirit of the law calls for something more if the day is to be "sanctified"—the hearing of sermons, the assisting at other services which are not of strict obligation, and the reading of good spiritual books.

6. The Mass is said throughout the Western Church in the Latin tongue. In some parts of the Eastern Church it is said in Greek, by permission of the Holy See. Latin is considered to be the universal language of the world, it is a language which varies but little from century to century; it is practically always and everywhere the same. For this reason amongst others, the Catholic Church has made it her official and universal tongue. Her ritual, her principal services are in Latin. What English is to England, or French to France, Latin is to the Catholic Church. The Church is a kingdom, Latin is her national tongue. Her laws are in her national tongue; her ritual, and the office that her priests say daily, are, likewise, in her official tongue. Far from being an "unknown tongue," it is the one most generally known. Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, and other languages have Latin as their common root. Many French words, and many of our English words, are derived from it, as from their mother tongue.

At the time of the "Reformation" both the English and German "Reformers" were loath to give it up.[1] A common tongue is a bond of union amongst the members of a church which exists in many lands; it is also a safeguard against the introduction of new doctrines and rites in the different countries of the world. The principal services of the Church in Latin are familiar to the Catholic of average education throughout the world, and when he goes to a strange country, it is helpful to him to hear the Mass and the other services in that common Latin mother tongue. Addresses to the people are always made in the vernacular, in the language "understanded of the people"; solemn prayers made to God, in the name of the Church, are made in the Church's official tongue, translations of them being provided for the people in each country according to their own native tongue. As the English language binds together the English people throughout the world, so the Latin tongue is a link between Catholics, uniting Catholics wherever they may be. The children of one common mother have one common mother tongue. One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one Church, one sacrifice, one kingdom, one tongue.

[1] See *Edward VI and the Book of Common Prayer*, Ch. xiv, et passim.

CHAPTER XXII

RITUAL IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH[1]

1. THE debatable question of rites and ceremonies comes naturally and appositely after the consideration of the Blessed Sacrament and the Holy Mass. The most holy Sacrament of the altar is the centre of Catholic worship; ritual is the expression of that worship. The most high God is the centre of the ritual and worship of heaven; the same God, concealed behind the veil of the sacrament, as the face of Moses was veiled lest its brightness should dazzle the Jewish people, is the secret at once and the centre of ritual and worship on earth. We have the description of heaven's worship of God from the inspired pen of St John, "the disciple whom Jesus loved," in the fourth, fifth and eighth chapters of the Apocalypse. We are told of the "rainbow around the throne," and the "twenty ancients clothed in white garments with golden crowns on their heads," and "the seven lamps burning before the throne," and "before the throne the sea of glass like crystal," and the "living creatures saying, Holy, Holy, Holy," and "the four-and-twenty ancients falling down before Him that sitteth on the throne," and "the golden vials full of odours," and "the harps," and "the priests," and the "golden censer with much incense," and "the smoke of the incense," and "the golden altar." This worship of heaven we in our humble way try to emulate and imitate on earth around the earthly throne of the same God.

The use of ritual in the Catholic Church is evidence that she accepts three facts as divine: (1) That the body, as well as the soul, comes from God, and that therefore we owe to Him not only the service of the mind and the heart, but the worship of our external sense; (2) that it is

[1] See *Ritual in Catholic Worship.* Sermon preached in Westminster Cathedral by the present writer.

through the senses that we appeal to the mind and heart of man to teach him and to impress him, and to move him to love and sorrow; (3) that God is the God of nature as well as the God of grace—"The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof"[1]—consequently that we have to consecrate to Him earth's gifts as well as heaven's blessings.

2. There are two dangers in the use of external rites and ceremonies, one of which is that it is not understood or is misunderstood; and from misunderstanding people condemn that of which they fail to see the meaning. The second danger is that some people misuse ritual. Those who misunderstand, or do not understand, will have no ritual—no lights on the altar, no candles and flowers, no incense, no vestments, no triumphant processions, no ceremonies in the sanctuary, no soul-stirring music in the choir. They will have all these in theatres and music-halls, in the palaces of kings and the mansions of the rich, but not in the church of God. They quote the words of our Lord to the woman at the well of Samaria: "God is a spirit, and they who worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth."[2] They cite the reproach of God to Israel: "This people worshippeth Me with their lips, but their hearts are far from Me"[3]; or His denunciations against "the rulers of Sodom" and "the people of Gomorrha": "To what purpose do you offer the multitude of victims? . . . . Offer sacrifice no more in vain. Incense is an abomination to Me. The new moons and sabbaths and other festivals I will not abide." "Wash yourselves, be clean; take away the evil of your devices from My eyes; cease to do evil, learn to do well, and then come, saith the Lord; if your sins be as scarlet they shall be made white as snow, if they be red as crimson they shall be white as wool."[4] Why this condemnation of ritualism? It was on

[1] Ps. xxiii, 1. [2] John iv, 24. [3] Isa. xxix, 13. [4] Isa. i, 11, 18.

account of its misuse. It had degenerated into mere formalism. There was exterior piety and interior wickedness; prayers of the lips which sprang not from the heart; outward sacrifice and inward sin. It was ritualism and nothing more. It lacked "spirit and truth." All ritual that is not inspired by interior religion, that is not a symbol, a reflection, and a sermon, however sensuous and gorgeous and glittering, is as "sounding brass and tinkling cymbals." Every offering we make, every genuflection we perform, every censer we wave, must be "quickened" by the "spirit" of faith and love, else it is empty and vain, it is as a shell without a kernel, as a body without a soul. This is one of the dangers and pitfalls of ritualism outside the Catholic Church. There are some who make ritualism their religion; they rest on the outward form. Doctrine goes for little; incense and lights for everything. Such people are æsthetics rather than Christians, only instead of going into an ecstasy over a sunflower or a piece of old china or a bit of point lace, they rave about "chasubles," and "incense," and "high celebrations," and "candles and flowers," as though this were religion, and nothing else were required. They affect to "say Mass," and will not trouble to ask whether their minister is really and undoubtedly a properly ordained priest. They wear vestments, and care little as to whether the wearer has "orders." They light candles, and burn lamps, and bow down without satisfying themselves that there is a divine and real presence before which to prostrate. They have "an altar," or call it so, and never inquire about the sacrifice of which an altar is a symbol and sign. In a word, ritualism is their religion; and this God condemns, and this the Catholic Church reprobates with all her heart and soul.

3. True ritualism, however—external worship, the offering of self, of nature's gifts, body worship and the worship of nature, wedded in indissoluble wedlock to the worship

of mind, of heart, of soul, united to spirit worship, that is, —*this* man owes to God, and *this* God expects from man. God Himself prescribed in the old law and in the new, by word and example, this service of exterior worship and interior love. What are the Books of Leviticus and Deuteronomy but legal treatises, nay, books of God's commandments on rites and ceremonies? What words could be more awful and terrible than God's threats against those who do not obey the ceremonies which He prescribes? "If thou wilt not hear the voice of the Lord thy God to do and keep all His commandments and ceremonies, these curses shall come upon thee, cursed shalt thou be in the city, cursed in the field, cursed shall be thy barn and cursed thy stores . . . . cursed in thy going out and thy coming in, etc."[1] The psalms of David are full of the praises of external ritual, of "psaltery and harp," of "strings and organs," of "high-sounding cymbals" and the rest. How gorgeous again the ritual in the dedication of Solomon's temple, gorgeous beyond the gorgeousness of any Catholic ceremony! We find ritual everywhere in the incidents recorded in the olden times. God appears to Jacob; and there is a ladder, and there are angels, and there is a wrestling and then a blessing; there is a stone which is anointed, and words are spoken of deep and solemn meaning. God gives the law to Moses, and we have the music of thunder, the lightning flash, the voice is heard, the face of Moses is veiled, and he comes down from the mountain with the tables of stone.

In the New Testament we have ritual in all the solemn scenes of our Lord's life. He is born at Bethlehem; angels sing "Glory to God;" shepherds go down in procession to visit the new-born King; a star, strange and mysterious, calls the wise men to "adore" Him "who is called King of the Jews." Jesus gives sight to the blind; He does it ritualistically, with the anointing of his

[1] Deut. xxviii, 15 et seq.

eyes with dust, upon which He has first spat, and the eyes that were closed see. He gives speech to a dumb man by touching his tongue. He raises Lazarus to life, but with what solemnity does He stand at the tomb, and "groan within Himself," and pray to the Father, and then cry out: "Lazarus, come forth!" Then there is the transfiguration with its ceremonies, the entry into Jerusalem in solemn procession with the garments on the road, and palm branches waved overhead, and the triumphant song of "Hosanna to David's son." The institution of the Blessed Sacrament calls for ceremony, blessing and breaking of bread, the raising of eyes to heaven, the solemn words of power. Then we have the sublime tragic ritual of Calvary —the seven words, the rending of the veil of the temple, the splitting of the rocks, the shaking of the earth, the darkening of the sun, the opening of the graves, and the words of the centurion: "Of a truth this was the Son of God!" The resurrection is a ceremonious one. The institution of the sacrament of penance is made with ceremonies, and the ascension is accompanied with a ritual as sacred as it is sublime.

The Apocalypse of St John reveals to us the ritual of heaven—a ritual more gorgeous than our own, with the angels holding golden censers of incense; ancients falling down before the Lamb, and laying their crowns before the All-crowned; virgins following in procession; harpers harping upon their harps; all joining in the glorious anthem: "Amen, benediction and glory," "Holy, holy, holy Lord God of hosts. Worthy is the Lamb that was slain."

4. What wonder that we men should serve God by external worship, the worship of body and sense, as well as by interior service, the consecration of mind and soul? The senses are the windows through which are reflected the thoughts of the mind and heart. The fire of love enkindled in the heart must be in the eye that sees, and the

tongue that speaks, and the other senses that act, even as a light or a fire within a house is seen through the window or the open door. The life of grace within the soul must manifest itself without, as the life of the tree is known by its leaves, its flowers, its fruit. A man who believes in God, and loves Him in whom He believes, must reveal it in his outward life. These outward acts are not religion, but they are the signs of religion; they are not devotion, but they are the perfume of devotion; they are not love, but they are the aroma of love, the incense which comes from the burning censer of the heart.

God is the God of nature. In the Church's ritual nature pays tribute to nature's God. This is why Catholics have beautiful churches, and adorn them as best they can. This is the secret of the flowers, and candles, and incense used in divine worship. This is why they bow the head, and bend the knee, and spend the voice in holy song. Nature's gifts are given to God. Is all the marble to be formed into statues of Venus and Mars, and all the stone in the quarries to be used in making statues of the world's great men? Is all the wood in the forest—the oak, the cedar, the cypress—to be dedicated to the service of the creature, and none to the service of God? Are all the flowers that grow on the bosom of God's fair earth to shed their perfumes and display their glory, and then wither and droop, and die in the ball-room, the drawing-room, the dining-room; and is God's altar to be left naked and bare? Are the sweet-smelling perfumes of Arabia to flatter the senses of sensuous men and women, and none to be given to God, from whose bountiful hand all come? Are vestments to be worn in the royal court or on the judicial bench, by mayors and members of corporations, by Freemasons and Oddfellows, and are God's ministers to appear before Him in their ordinary work-a-day clothes? The answer of the Catholic Church to all these questions is, "A thousand times, No." She gives not the good but the best, not

the fair but the fairest, as nature's gift to nature's God.

People object sometimes that "ritual is *sensuous*." So is man; he has five senses, the ministers to the mind, the channels through which earthly things pass to the soul and the messengers of the soul to the outer world; hence he dedicates them to God. "Ritual is distracting," they add. It *is* distracting; it distracts us from earthly things, and helps to lift up our thoughts to God. "Ritual is poetical and sentimental." So is man; a living poem, and the inexhaustible theme of poets. Religion takes man as she finds him, and endeavours to lead him—his senses, his imagination, his intellect, his will, his whole being—by "the cords of Adam," to God. It appeals to his exterior sense that, through that, it may appeal to his intelligence and his soul.

5. And here we have another reason why we use ritual in the service of God; it appeals to man, it is a sermon more eloquent than the words of eloquent men. As the wise Seneca said wisely: "We believe our eyes rather than we believe our ears." The Church speaks to man through his eyes as well as through his ears. Her ritual is the symbol of her creed, the expression of her belief, the sermon which she daily preaches, even when the living voice is still. The holy water at the church door tells of the purity which God demands of the soul. The tabernacle speaks of the divine, though veiled, presence in the mystery of love. The lighted lamp, the burning candles, the perfumed flowers all cry out: "Come, let us adore." The baptismal font is a perpetual reminder that we are the sons of God. The confessional suggests to us that if we fall and fail, we may rise again and stand. The stations of the cross preach to us from the text: "See what love!" The statues and pictures of saints are as beacon-lights, leading us upwards and onwards to the throne of the Most High. The music lifts up the soul, and stirs it now to sorrow, now to joy, now to faith, hope and

love, always to God. The Latin tongue is a perpetual homily on the universality of the Catholic Church. The bending of the knee and the bowing of the head, the rising incense, the vestments of the priest, all are a sermon on the real presence of Jesus in the most holy Sacrament of His love. The ceremonial of the Catholic Church knits her children together, and makes them one. Separated by seas and mountains and by centuries of time, they meet and are one at the foot of the altar. An English Catholic is at home in a Catholic church in Australia, China or wherever you will; a foreign Catholic of whatever land is at home in a Catholic church in England. The same ceremonies, the same rites, the same Latin tongue appeal to the Catholic wherever he may be, and he feels at home in His Father's house. Ceremonies and rites speak to him of God; through them he speaks to God; in them God speaks to him. They are His outward sign of inward grace, His sacrament of love.

CHAPTER XXIII

INVOCATION OF SAINTS

1. From the master to the servant, from the king to the courtier, from God to His elect and best-loved creatures, the transition, in a sense, is natural, although in their nature they, His creatures, are separated from Him, their Creator, by a distance which is not merely immeasurable but infinite. We have been considering the Master and the Master's worship. We come now to the servants. We are to see who they are, what they are; we are to define their relationship to God, and their influence upon us men. Until recent years the invocation of saints, and the relative honour paid to them as servants of God and courtiers of the great King, had been considered in England, and in other lands where Protestantism prevails, as one of the gravest accusations against the Catholic Church. The accusation comes from not understanding the meaning of the charge. When Michol, the daughter of Saul, saw David dancing with all his might before the ark, she sneered in her ignorance of his motive and intention in so acting. People now-a-days. Michol-like, sneer at Catholic teaching and Catholic practices, and for the same reason, "they know not what they do." The sneering race must always be perpetuated, as long as men refuse to learn. The invocation of saints, the asking that is of their prayers, though advocated by many Protestants to-day, is condemned by an article of their Church's Creed,[1] as "a vain thing fondly invented and having no warranty in scripture, but rather repugnant to the word of God." In the "Charge delivered at the First Visitation by Frederick, Archbishop of Canterbury," [2]

[1] Article XXII. [2] Part II.

in 1898, the chief representative of the Established Church in England, practically renewed that article, notwithstanding that the practice is known to exist among many of the members of the Anglican body. Admitting that "we do not worship them, but only ask for their aid, just as we might ask a living man to give us his prayers," the archbishop still condemns the practice. "There is nothing like such prayers in the bible," he says, "and the Church of England will not permit them to her members." The members evidently do not ask the Church of England; in this, as in other things, they are guided by the Church of England *principle* of "private judgement," and acknowledge no authority which can permit or forbid. The archbishop is obliged to own that "the worship of the saints prevailed in the Church for *many centuries*": this it would be impossible to deny; but "the Church has a right to learn by experience, and experience has shown that the practice is dangerous," although "the one thing which can be said for such worship . . . . is that it seems to give reality to the belief in the communion of saints, living and departed." "We know that our loved ones are there [in heaven] and that they are in the hands of a tender Father and loving Saviour," he continues; and yet we may not speak to them, nor may they speak for us. The Catholic doctrine is diametrically the reverse of this. In our Creed we say, "I believe in the communion of saints," and we believe not simply that our "loved ones are there," but that we are in "communion" with them. "I believe," the Catholic says, "that the saints reigning with God are to be honoured and called upon; and that they offer prayers for us."[1] We hold that "the saints reigning with Christ offer their prayers for men to God; that it is good and useful to call upon them with supplication, and in order to obtain benefits from God through Jesus Christ, who alone is our

[1] Creed of Pope Pius IV.

Redeemer and Saviour, to have recourse to their prayers, help and aid."[1] This was formerly the faith of England. Many landmarks of that belief still remain. Some of our towns are named after saints; several districts in London are called by their names; nearly every church in city, town, village and hamlet throughout the length and breadth of England is dedicated to a saint. St Alban's, St Ives', St Helen's, St Pancras', St Martin's, St Giles', all go to show that for "many centuries" saints were venerated in this land. Children are still baptized in saint's names; great men have lived since England's apostasy from the faith of the saints, but English mothers and fathers still cling at least to the names of the saints. "A Table of the Feasts that are to be observed in the Church of England throughout the year," still appears at the beginning of the Book of Common Prayer, and the feasts are, with three exceptions, the feasts of saints. And yet "the Church of England will not permit [prayers to them] to her members." Truly these are evidences, at least, and relics of the faith and practice of "many centuries."

We Catholics are in "continuity" with the 'many centuries." We have distinct and definite views, or rather convictions, upon the article of our Creed: "I believe in the communion of saints." We believe that they are not dead. God "is not the God of the dead but of the living."[2] They are living—they who were, and are, His faithful children—living to-day and for ever in the house of the eternal Father. They are far above us, and yet they are not beyond our reach. We can speak to them, and they, by their Father and our Father's sweet will, can hear us. We can think of them, and they can think of us. We can love them, and they can love us. We can ask their prayers, and they can plead for us. There is no barrier

[1] Council of Trent, *De Invocat. Sanct.*, Sess. xxv

[2] Mark xii, 27.

raised between God's children on earth and God's children in heaven. There is no "chaos," like that which lies between the eternally lost and the eternally saved, lying between the Church on earth and the Church in heaven; it is one kingdom under one King, one home of the one Father. We can fly to them on the wings of prayer; our spirit can commune with "the spirits of the just made perfect." This is what a Catholic understands by "the communion of saints"—a practical sympathy, and an actual, though spiritual, union between the militant Church and the Church triumphant, and a supernatural communication between the two. As it was said of Adam and Eve, "They shall be two in one flesh," we may say of God's earthly and heavenly children, "They shall be two in one spirit." We honour them with a relative honour because they are the courtiers of the great King, the favoured children of the great Father. We pray to them because their nearness to God must give efficacy to their prayers.

2. The doctrine of the communion of saints rests upon three broad principles, which we hold to be beyond cavil or doubt. (1) The efficacy of intercessory prayer, i.e., that creatures of God can appeal to God for each other, and that God will listen to the fraternal prayer. (2) That the saints in heaven can hear us when we pray, because "the Master wills it so," and in their spiritual nature they are not fettered by ties of flesh to distance or to space. (3) That God listens to, and answers their prayer.

a. We have only to read the Epistles of St Paul, to the Ephesians, to the Corinthians, to the Romans, to see and appreciate the value of intercessory prayer. He constantly commends himself to their prayers, and bids them pray for each other; and even, as our Lord on the eve of His passion prayed most earnestly to the "Holy Father [to] keep them in My name whom Thou hast given to Me," so does the great apostle promise to pray for his spiritual children in Christ and in the Father. The apostle St

James, exhorts the faithful: "Pray for one another that you may be saved."[1] In the model prayer given to us by Jesus Christ Himself we have a perfect prayer of intercession. It is not "*my* Father, but *our* Father," not "give *me*, but give *us*," not "forgive *me*, but forgive *us*, as *we* forgive," not "lead *me* not, but lead *us* not, into temptation, but deliver *us* from evil. Amen." The very Christian instinct within us prompts us to say "pray for me," "pray for him," "pray for them," and we are confident of the value of this mutual prayer.

b. If then "the prayer of the just man availeth much" when on earth, will it not avail in heaven? If "our dear ones" can pray for us when they are here, why not, *a fortiori*, when they are there? If a rose tree planted in a field amidst stones and stubble, or in a rough and rocky soil, bears scented flowers, will it cease to bear them when transplanted into a garden of cultivated soil? A tree, fruitful in a desert land, will not be less fruitful if it once takes root again in a garden. If a child living in a far-off land has influence over the mother's heart, he is not likely to lose that influence when he returns to the mother's home. A friend of a king, when summoned to the royal court to live under the same roof with his royal friend, gains rather than loses in his influence and power. God's children on earth can pray for each other, why should they not when, going from darkness to light, they are introduced into the immediate presence of the eternal Father, and the almighty King?

That they know that we speak to them is plain from holy writ. They see things in God as in a clear crystal mirror, and they see that we lift up hands and voice and mind to them in prayer. God reveals it to them, and our prayers are not in vain. "There shall be joy in heaven before the angels of God, upon one sinner doing penance," our Lord tells us.[2] They must, therefore, know, else how

[1] Jas. v, 16. [2] Luke xv, 10.

rejoice? Love and joy are founded on knowledge and sympathy. The saints about the throne were heard by St John to say:[1] "Thou hast made us a kingdom to our God . . . . and we shall reign upon the earth." Abraham knew of Moses and the prophets on earth though they lived several centuries after Abraham's death.[2]

c. That the saints take an interest in us on earth no one can doubt. Children of the same Father, redeemed by the blood-shedding of the same Son, tabernacles and temples of the same Holy Ghost, they must be one with us in sympathy and love. We are fighting the battle they once fought, and with the same weapons which were theirs; they, then, on the mountain must be interested in us who are fighting on the plain. They cannot give us grace, they cannot forgive us sin; but they can pray for us, and through their prayers God gives grace, and pardons sin. Lot prayed for the angel to spare Segor; Abraham prayed for Sodom; Job prayed for his friends; so do saints pray for us. Of Jeremias it was said by Onias to Judas Maccabeus: "This is the lover of his brethren and the people of Israel. This is he that prayeth much for the people and for all the holy city, Jeremias the prophet of God." Jeremias gave Judas, in his vision, a golden sword, "a gift from God, wherewith thou shalt overcome."[3] The angel Raphael assured Tobias of the help of his prayers in heaven: "When thou didst pray . . . . *I* offered thy prayers to the Lord."[4] The angel consequently must have known in heaven when Tobias prayed on earth, and must have had an interest in his welfare before the Most High.

3. This faith of the Church to-day in the prayers of her children who have gone to their eternal home has been the faith of the Church from the beginning. It is another proof—if proof were needed—of the "continuity" of

[1] Apoc. v, 10. [2] Luke xvi, 31. [3] 2 Macc. xv, 14-16.
[4] Tob. xii 12.

doctrine in the Catholic Church with the Church of the early ages. Dr Temple was right, it "has prevailed in the Church for many centuries," in all the centuries since the Christian Church was founded by Jesus Christ. The earliest records attest this. The late Dr Rock in his most interesting and instructive book, "Hierurgia,[1] as well as De Rossi in his account of the catacombs, quotes inscriptions found of late years in the subterranean vaults which served as churches and burial places, as well as homes and hiding-places for the Christians during the very earliest ages of the Church, which prove, beyond hesitation, that in those days they believed in the communion of saints. One runs thus: "Atticus, thy spirit is in bliss; pray for thy parents." Another: "Jovianus, may you live in God and pray." Again: "Pray for us, because we know that thou art in Christ." "Sabbatius, sweet soul, pray and entreat for thy brethren and comrades," is the wording of another; all of them testifying to the belief that the saints with God know what passes on earth when we pray to them, and that they can help us by their prayers. The liturgies, which we have already several times cited as our evidence of continuity, confirm the same trusting belief in the efficacy of saints' prayers. The tradition was carried on by the doctors and Christian teachers of the succeeding centuries, who also proved by their writings that honour was paid to the saints as servants of God, and that confidence was placed in their intercession as courtiers ever before the throne of the Most High. Volumes could be filled with quotations upon the subject, for about it there was evidently no controversy, no diversity of opinion at that time. Origen commenting on the words of the Apocalypse, "I know thy works and thy charity," writes:[2] "And of the holy men who have departed this life, retaining their charity towards those whom they have left behind, we may

[1] Vol. II. [2] *In Cant. Cantic.*, lib. III, n. 75 (Migne).

be permitted to say that they are anxious for their salvation; and that they assist them by their prayers and their mediation with God. For it is written in the book of the Maccabees: 'This is Jeremias, the prophet of God, who always prays for the people.'" St John Chrysostom writes words which would come quite naturally to a preacher in a Catholic pulpit to-day: "Let us have recourse, my beloved, to the prayers of the saints, and beg of them to make intercession for us. And not only must we have confidence in their intercession, we must as well so regulate our lives and so aim at higher things that their prayers for us may avail."[1] St Cyril, writing "to his brother Cornelius greeting," after speaking of their union on earth and saying that "The unitedness of the brotherhood has been approved," "Since with you there is but one mind and one voice as the whole Roman Church has confessed," proposes that they should make a compact to pray for each other in life and after death: "Be we mindful of each other, in concord and of one mind, pray we ever, on either side, one for the other, lighten we our burdens and our distresses by mutual affection. And whichsoever of us shall, by the speediness of the divine vouchsafement, go hence the first, let our love continue in the presence of the Lord, cease not our prayers for our brethren and our sisters in presence of the mercy of the Father."[2] In another letter to Firmilian[3] he speaks again of unity, not on earth only but in heaven: "Unity and peace and concord afford the highest pleasure, not only to faithful men who know the truth, but to the very angels in heaven, amongst whom the divine word says, 'There is joy over the sinner that repenteth and returneth to the bond of unity'; which assuredly would not be said of angels, who have their conversation in heaven, unless they too, who rejoice in our unity, were united to us." For the continuity of this doctrine expressed in simple prose by

[1] In cap. xix. Gen., Hom. 44. [2] *Epist.* lx, n. 4.
[3] *Epist.* lxxv, n. 1, 2.

St Cyril in the fourth century we have also the same idea conveyed in graceful verse by Cardinal Newman in the nineteenth century, showing the same unity between angels and saints and men:

> "Angels, to whom the willing task is given,
> Shall tend, and nurse, and lull thee as thou liest;
> And Masses on the earth and prayers in heaven
> Shall aid thee at the throne of the Most Highest."

This is the communion of saints, whether in the Church militant on earth, the Church suffering in purgatory, or the Church triumphant in heaven—the "unitedness of brotherhood," union of sympathy, love and prayer.

4. The objection which is sometimes made against the Catholic doctrine, viz., that it detracts from our duty to and worship of God, is answered by St Augustine. He reminds his readers of a truth familiar to every little Catholic child, that whatever reverence, devotion or honour we pay to a saint is only relative, i.e., we pay it to him because he is a child of God, we pay it to God through the saint. There is an infinite distance between God and even His holiest creature. The one who is nearest to Him is infinitely removed from Him. Everything a saint has had or has, has done or does—everything comes from God, "the King of Ages, to whom alone honour and glory for ever and ever." We may call our devotion "worship," or "cult," or "veneration," or what we choose, it all has one meaning—it goes to God through the saint, it is given to the saint because of God; and if we expect gifts from the saint they must first come from God; he is only the channel through which prayer and grace go and come. God is "Alpha and Omega," the "First and Last," the 'Beginning and the End." Saint Augustine puts it clearly: "The Christian people celebrate the memory of the martyrs with a religious solemnity, in order that they may learn to imitate them and may be associated with their merits and be aided by their

prayers; but to no martyr—to the God alone of martyrs, in memory of them, do we raise altars. For what bishop . . . . assisting at the altar was ever heard to say: 'To thee Peter, to thee Paul, to thee Cyprian, do we make this offering?' To God alone, who crowned the martyrs, is sacrifice offered in the places where their relics rest. . . . We offer no sacrifice to any martyr, nor to any saint, nor to any angel; and, should any one fall into the error, sound doctrine will raise its voice that he be corrected, or condemned, or avowed."[1] In like manner, if a miracle is ascribed by the Church to a saint, the Church only wishes to show that God worked the miracle through the instrumentality of, or in answer to the prayer of the saint. God alone can, of His own divine power, suspend, change, or abrogate a law of nature which God alone has made. God only can give sight to blind eyes, if they are closed beyond the power of nature's opening; He alone can raise a dead man to life. But, should He so will, He can do it at the prayer of His servant, or He can make use of His servant's hand, or voice, or will to do what, to the servant unaided, would be impossible. We have cast out devils "in Thy name," it was said. It is always in God's name. We say that "Josue stopped the sun" in its course, that "Peter made the lame man walk." We mean that God did these things through Josue and through Peter. We say of a pen that "it writes well" or "it writes badly"; it is we and not the pen who write badly or well, the pen is only the instrument—fit or unfit—which we use in writing. So with God and His saints in working miracles—they are the instruments, He the power.

In the same manner with prayer. All prayer is made to God, though it may be made through the intercession of a saint. When we say, "We pray *to* a saint," it is equivalent to saying, "We pray *through* a saint." If we ask a favour

[1] Lib. XX, xxi, *Contra Faustum.*

of a sovereign through a courtier, the petition, though made directly to the courtier, is indirectly made to the king or queen. The courtier cannot give what we ask, we know this well; but his influence, added to our petition, may make our petition doubly or trebly sure of a favourable reply. The sovereign is God, the courtiers the saints. This lower world is ruled by influence. To "get on" we must have influence. What is that? Intercessors who have greater power than we ourselves enjoy. Saints are our "influence" in heaven. If a man wants promotion, or employment, or position, he gets some one in authority to assist him. The saints help us to get spiritual promotion here and hereafter. The people petition parliament, parliament petitions the throne, and the favour asked is granted by the crown. The throne is God, saints and angels are the heavenly parliament, we are "the people." The sovereign does not lose either in dignity or power by our presenting our petitions through some one who is nearer to the throne than we. Neither does it detract from God's honour—quite the reverse—if we ask saints, whether on earth or in heaven, to help us by their prayers.

5. Finally, the honour we may pay to the relics, or images, or pictures of saints, redounds in like manner upon God. We give to them an honour which is relative. We honour these religious objects because they belong to God's servants, to His children, and through them to Himself. The teaching of the Church, that "the relics of the saints are to be held in veneration,"[1] is only a development of what we have been saying. The saint belongs to God, and owes all to Him; we owe to God that we should respect everything that belonged to the saint. God may or may not communicate to the relics a virtue which is not theirs by right or by inheritance. His is the power of miracles. He communicated this power to the very shadow of Peter,[2] to handkerchiefs

[1] Creed of Pope Pius IV. [2] Acts v, 15.

and aprons which had touched the body of Paul,[1] to the mantle of Elias,[2] to the bones of the dead Eliseus, so that when the dead man was placed upon them life came from the dead to the dead.[3] He can work miracles through other relics if He chooses, even as He can raise up children to Abraham from the very stones. But whether He give this power beyond nature's power, or not, we respect the relics on account of their connection with those who have been on earth, and are in heaven, so closely united to God. We are but following what seems to be an honoured custom in our race. We visit the tombs of our dear dead. Why? Their relics are there. If any one treated their tomb with disrespect we should resent it as a desecration. Why? Because our love for those who have gone is extended to that which belonged to them, even to the crumbling bones and corrupted clay which was once their earthly home. If the body is exhumed, we visit the tomb no longer, and we resent nothing that is done to the grave. Why? The relics have gone, and it was the relics that we respected. So do we reverence the relics of our saints. Shakespeare's town is a place of pilgrimage for people from all over the world; they visit his house, the church in which he worshipped, the place in which he is supposed to have knelt, the streets in which he walked. In the same spirit, but from a higher and supernatural motive, we visit the homes, the earthly shrines of our saints; and, kneeling there, pray to their spirit that has gone, asking that spirit to plead for us with the divine Spirit, that we may be as they, now and ever. People go in crowds to see the carriage in which Napoleon drove; they gaze with open eyes and open mouths at the bed in which Queen Elizabeth slept; they are proud to sit in a chair in which Henry VIII once sat; they cut off pieces of a tree under which a fugitive king is supposed to have rested;

[1] Ibid. xix, 12. [2] 4 Kings ii, 14. [3] Ibid xiii, 21.

they look with curiosity at the clothes in which a murderer was hanged; and then they blame Catholics for guarding and showing reverence to the relics of the servants of God. In the days of St Jerome, the heretic Vigilantius complained of Christians paying honour to relics in the same way. The answer of St Jerome to Vigilantius is the answer of the Catholic Church to-day: "We do not worship, we do not adore the relics of the martyrs; but we honour them, that our minds may be raised to Him whose martyrs they were. We honour them, that this honour may be referred to Him who says: 'He that receiveth you receiveth Me.'"[1] The attitude of the Church towards the saints may be summed up in her daily prayer: "Blessed be *God* in His angels and in His saints," and in the words of the psalmist, which she makes her own, "Wonderful is *God* in His saints."[2]

[1] *Epist.* 53 *ad Riparium contra Vigilantium.* [2] Ps. lxvii, 36.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND THE DIVINE MOTHER

1. ALL that we have said in the last chapter may be repeated, only in a tenfold degree, of Mary, the mother of Jesus. She is "the Queen of all Saints," the highest in grace, the greatest in sanctity, the most generously gifted by God, the noblest in dignity, the richest in prerogatives, and the nearest to God of all. She is a creature, infinitely removed in nature from God, depending upon Him for everything of nature, of grace and of glory; and yet she enjoys a unique relationship with Him, which she shares with no one else, with no angel and no saint. Therefore is her position, her influence, her power unique. She has a special place in the Catholic Creed: "I believe in Jesus Christ . . . . who was conceived of the Holy Ghost, *born of the Virgin Mary*." If we could erase that word from the Creed, and efface it from the page of the Gospel, or show it not to be true, Mary would be as any other saint, only greater perhaps in grace and love; but that article of our creed being part of our faith, we give to Mary a special place in our thought, in our devotion, in our confidence, and in our love. Her pre-eminence amongst them, standing as she does, like Saul amongst the prophets, head and shoulders above them all, results from her nearness to God. She is His mother. When we have said that we have said everything. Her dignity, her other privileges, her fulness of grace, her position in the Catholic Church, all come from the one privilege of divine motherhood. "Thus shall [the one] be honoured whom the King hath had a mind to honour."[1] The King hath had a mind to

[1] Esther vi, 9.

honour Mary; thus then shall she be honoured by the King's loyal followers and devoted sons.

1. Of the many devotional practices of the Catholic Church none is more logical than that of paying honour to Mary, provided we once admit, as all Christians must admit, the fundamental doctrine of Christianity, the incarnation. Once confess, with St Athanasius, that "Jesus Christ is God and man; God of the substance of the Father begotten before the world; Man of the substance of His mother born in the world," and devotion to Mary, the mother, follows as a natural and necessary consequence. The position of an unbeliever in Christianity —an Ebionite, an Arian, a Nestorian, or a modern Unitarian—is, though a false one, a logical one, and one which, taking their false premises as true, is tenable; but that a Christian, who believes as St Athanasius believed, can deny to Mary this honour due to her as mother of the great King passes our understanding. She was the one chosen by the eternal Father to be the mother of His only-begotten Son; she was prepared by the Holy Ghost for the coming of that Son; the Word was made flesh of her flesh, bone of her bone, blood of her blood. "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee, and therefore also the Holy One that shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of the Most High"[1] coupled with the words which testify to the fulfilment of the angel's promise, "And Mary brought forth her first-born Son,"[2] are the Church's divine guarantee that she is following the divine will in her attitude of reverence, devotion and love towards Mary. The creeds of all Christian churches include this as an article of their faith: "I believe in Jesus Christ . . . . born of the Virgin Mary." All Christians therefore should honour her with a special honour whom Father, Son and

[1] Luke i, 35. [2] Luke ii, 7.

Holy Ghost have so signally honoured. We cannot separate the mother and the Son in prophecy and in the reality of life; we may not separate them in our thoughts and in our love. They were always together, always united—in the Garden of Eden in the promise; in the prophecy of Isaias "a virgin shall conceive and bring forth a Son"; in the annunciation; at Bethlehem; for thirty years at Nazareth; at Cana of Galilee; on Calvary; on Olivet; in heaven. "What God hath joined together let no man put asunder." And if we pray to her, and thus recognize her power, it is because she is near to God; and if we pray more frequently and with greater confidence than to the other saints of God, it is because she is nearer to Him than they; for is she not His mother? If He listened to Moses, to Abraham, to Lot, to Josue, to His patriarchs of old, and to His servants in these our days, surely will He not listen to His own mother? Devotion and prayer to Mary the mother are in reality homage paid to Jesus the divine Son. She is what she is because He is what He is. We Catholics have a right estimate of her, because we have a right estimate of Him. He is God; she is the Mother of God. The absence of reverence and love for the Mother of God comes from the lack of true practical faith in the incarnation, from the non-realization of this theological fact that He who was born of Mary was "Very God of very God," "King of Ages and immortal". If we understood this truth in its fulness and in its consequences we should venerate the robe and the shoes which He wore, the nails and the spear and the wood of the cross which He sanctified by contact, the ground upon which He trod, and thereby made holy—how much more the one to whom He was physically united as child is united to mother, under whose roof He lived and at whose table He sat, and whose hands ministered to His wants for thirty out of the three and thirty years that He spent amongst men? The *cultus* which the Catholic Church has ever paid to

Mary from the beginning, which increased in intensity from the time of the clear definition of her position as *Theotocos* or mother of God at Ephesus, and which has never waned since nor grown less, in east or west, is the natural and logical development of her undying faith in the incarnation. "If the Church has exalted Mary . . . . it has been with a view to the glory of His humanity. If Mary is proclaimed as immaculate, it illustrates the doctrine of her maternity. If she is called the Mother of God, it is to remind Him, that, though He is out of sight, He nevertheless is our possession, for He is of the race of man. If she is painted with Him in her arms, it is because we will not suffer the Object of our love to cease to be human, because He is also divine. If she is the Mater Dolorosa, it is because she stands by His cross. If she is the Mater Desolata, it is because His dead body is laid in her lap. If again she is the Coronata, the crown is set upon her head by His dear hand."[1]

2. Mary is ours, because she was His. She belongs to the redeemed, because she belonged to the Redeemer. She is our mother, because she is His mother who is the "first born among many brethren."[2] The commission of Calvary, "Mother behold thy son, son behold thy mother," did not create this relationship between Christians and the mother of Christ, it only accentuated it, and defined it as an article of the Christian Creed. It needed no definition of Christ's vicar, it had already been defined by Christ. If a council defined it four centuries later, it was only the renewal of a divine definition, which some who had rejected His divinity had consequently denied. The *cultus* of Mary did not begin at Ephesus, it began on Calvary when John, as the representative of the Church at the foot of the cross, "from that hour took her to his own."[3] The Church has

[1] *Occasional Sermons of Cardinal Newman*, p. 40.
[2] Rom. viii, 29. [3] John xix, 27.

ever since looked upon Mary as her own. She erected Mary's image with the divine Child, and inscribed Mary's name with the name of Jesus in the catacombs. The apocryphal gospels, which, though not recognized by the Church as inspired, yet are of great weight as historical evidence, as some of them at least are mentioned by the earliest Christian writers—Origen, Tertullian and Clement of Alexandria—speak of Mary in devoutly glowing terms. "The gospel of St James" details in poetic language and with beautiful imagery, the marriage of Joachim and Ann, and their sorrow at being bereft of children. Ann prays and weeps, and in her bitterness complains lovingly to God, that, whereas the birds of the air build their nests, and the very brute breasts have their young, and the rivers and seas are not barren, and the earth brings forth flowers and fruit, she alone is left to mourn the absence of even one child. Then comes an angel's promise, and in due course Mary is born. Ann rejoices greatly, and Joachim holds a great feast, and the chief priest is represented as saying, "God of our fathers, give this child a name which shall be magnified in all time . . . . and a blessing that shall know no bounds." Another apocryphal gospel "the History of the Nativity," which comes to us from the same early times, tells of miracles wrought by Jesus at Mary's prayer. On the way to Egypt the lofty palm is said to have bent low, that they might partake of its fruit. A disconsolate mother pleads with Mary, and Jesus, at Mary's prayer heals her infant child: the little one is placed in the bed in which the Son of Mary had lain, and it arises up sound and well. Other apocryphal gospels are written in the same strain; and, though they do not afford arguments from divine inspiration, they are historical evidence of the early devotion of the Church to the mother of the incarnate Word.

The liturgies again of the early Church which are the embodiment of the Church's doctrine, her teaching both in theory and in practice, are all of the "same mind in Christ

Jesus." In the liturgy of St James, the priest says: "Commemorating our all-holy, spotless, exceeding glorious Lady, the Mother of God, and ever virgin Mary, with all saints and just men, let us commend ourselves and each other, and all our life to Christ, our God;" and the people answer: "To Thee, O Lord." In the liturgy of St Mark, we have these words: "Hail, thou that art full of grace, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, because thou didst bring forth the Saviour of the world, especially the most stainless, blessed—our Lady, Mother of God, and ever virgin." "St Chrysostom's liturgy" commemorates, "the all-holy, spotless, excellently laudable and glorious Lady, the Mother of God and ever Virgin Mary."

It would be impossible to attempt to quote from the writings of the early fathers. They are full of Mary's praises. Their language is such as would in these days of calm, calculating unbelief, be considered exaggerated if heard in a Catholic pulpit. They go beyond the titles given in the litany of Loretto to the divine mother. In his "Development of Christian Doctrine,"[1] Cardinal Newman, writing before his submission to the Catholic Church, instances some of these expressions of faith, confidence and love. After saying that the definition of the Council of Ephesus, that Mary was the Mother of God, had been anticipated by "the traditional feeling of Christians," he continues: "Thus the title *Theotocos*, or Mother of God, was familiar to Christians from primitive times, and had been used, among other writers, by Origen, Eusebius, St Alexander, St Ambrose, St Gregory Nazianzen, St Gregory Nyssen and St Nilus. She had been called "ever virgin" by others, as by St Epiphanius, St Jerome and Didymus. By others "the mother of all living," as being the antitype of Eve; for, as St Epiphanius observes, "In truth," not in

[1] Chap. iv, section ii, 11, 12.

shadow, "from Mary was Life itself brought into the world, that Mary might bear things, and might become mother of living things." St Augustine says that all have sinned "except the holy virgin Mary, concerning whom, *for the honour of the Lord*, I wish no question to be raised at all, when we are treating of sin." "She was alone, and wrought the world's salvation," says St Ambrose, alluding to her conception of the Redeemer. She is signified by the pillar of the cloud which guided the Israelites, according to the same father; and she had "so great grace as not only to have virginity herself, but to impart it to those with whom she came." "The rod out of the stem of Jesse" says St Jerome, and "the Eastern gate through which the high priest goes in and out, yet is ever shut;" "the wise woman," says St Nilus, "who hath clad all believers from the fleece of the Lamb, with the clothing of incorruption, and hath delivered them from their spiritual nakedness;" "the mother of Life, of beauty, of majesty, the morning star," according to Antiochus. "The mystical new heavens;" "the heavens carrying the divinity;" "the fruitful vine by whom we are translated from death unto life," according to St Ephrem. "The manna, which is delicate, sweet, bright, and virgin, which, as though coming from heaven, has poured down on all the people of the churches a food pleasanter than honey," according to St Maximus. St Proclus calls her "the unsullied shell which contains the pearl of price;" "the sacred shrine of sinlessness;" "the golden altar of holocaust;" "the holy oil of anointing;" "the costly alabaster box of spikenard;" "the ark gilt within and without;" "the heifer whose ashes, that is the Lord's body taken from her, cleanse those who are defiled by the pollution of sin;" "the fair bride of the canticles;" "the stay of believers;" "the Church's diadem;" "the expression of orthodoxy." These are oratorical expressions; but we use oratory on great subjects, not on small. Elsewhere he calls her "God's only bridge to man," and

elsewhere he breaks forth: "Run through all creation in your thoughts, and see if there be equal to, or greater than the holy virgin Mother of God." After quoting Theodotus and the words of St Fulgentius in which he calls Mary the "window of heaven," because "through her God poured true light upon the world," and "the heavenly ladder, for through her did God descend to the earth," and his invitation: "Come ye virgins to a virgin, come ye who conceive to one who conceived, ye who bear to one who bore, mothers to a mother, ye who give suck to one who suckled, young women to the young;" the cardinal concludes: "Such was the state of sentiment on the subject of the Blessed Virgin which the Arian, Nestorian and Monophysite heresies found in the Church; and on which the doctrinal occasions, consequent upon them, impressed a form and a consistency, which has been handed on in the east and west to this day."

3. The other privileges of our Lady, as the beautiful and pregnant words which we have been reading reveal, all centre around her maternity. Her immaculate conception was God's preparation for His own coming. The definition of the Church, as well as the testimonies of the eastern and western saints, expresses this thought. If Mary was conceived immaculate, it was not on her own account, but on account of Him who was to be born of her. It was not due to her; it was due to Him. She was a creature, and, in herself, she had no claim to the exceptional and unique privilege, any more than Jeremias and St John the Baptist had any claim to be born without sin. If to the former prophet "the word of the Lord came, saying, 'Before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee,'" the reason was given: "I have made thee a prophet to the nations."[1] He was to be the prophet of the Lord, and so, for His sake, was he sanctified. If St John the Baptist

[1] Jer. i, 5.

"leaped for joy" in his mother's womb in the presence of the unborn Jesus, and as a consequence "greater was not born of woman,"[2] this again was because he was to be the precursor of Jesus Christ, "to prepare His way before Him"; it was God's preparation again for His own coming. So Mary's immaculate conception, her being preserved from the stain of even original sin, was God's preparation for His own advent. He who came to take away sin could not live for nine months either in a desecrated temple or in a temple which had ever been, even for a moment, under a divine interdict. Pius IX, in the year 1854, on December 8, surrounded by his cardinals and more than two hundred archbishops and bishops and dignitaries of the Catholic world, in the decree *Ineffabilis Deus* declared, in ever memorable words, spoken as head of the Church to the entire Church, and at the wish and desire of kings, bishops, priests and people, after mature thought, serious prayer and long and careful discussion, as follows: "By the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ, of the blessed apostles Peter and Paul, and by our own authority, we declare, pronounce and define that the doctrine which holds that the most blessed Virgin Mary, in the first instant of her conception, by a special grace and privilege of almighty God, in view of the merits of Jesus Christ, the Saviour of mankind, was preserved free from all stain of original sin, has been revealed by God, and, therefore, is to be firmly and steadfastly believed by all the faithful. Wherefore, if any shall presume, which may God avert, to think in their heart otherwise than has been defined by us, let them know, and moreover understand, that they are condemned by their own judgement, that they have made shipwreck as regards the faith, and have fallen away from the unity of the Church." This was a new definition, but, needless to say, it was not the declaration of a new doctrine. There can be

[2] Luke i, 44.

no new doctrine; a new and clearer explanation, a new development or expansion of a doctrine, yes; a new doctrine, never. Truth, like Jesus Christ, is "the same yesterday, to-day and for ever," like the divine Trinity "as it was in the beginning, it is now, and it ever shall be, world without end. Amen." It was only an explicit and formal definition, an official decision, of what had always been, either explicitly or at least implicitly, the creed of the Catholic Church. Before it was formally defined theologians might question and discuss; after the definition discussion is at an end, faith supersedes reason, argument gives way to belief, and every Catholic says: "Credo—I believe." "I believe in the Catholic Church" and in her Catholic Creed. The immaculate conception had been the clear and explicit teaching of many doctors and saints before it was defined as an article of faith, just as they had taught the divine motherhood of Mary before the decree of the Council of Ephesus settled the question beyond doubt and for ever. Some of the citations which we have given from the liturgies of the Church and the writings of the fathers speak of "the stainless Virgin," "the unsullied shell which contained the pearl of great price," the "all undefiled mother of holiness." Many others could be added, all tending to prove that Mary was "entirely free from every defilement and stain of sin," according to St Ephrem; that in the words of St Cyril of Alexandria, "With the exception of Christ and His blessed mother, we are all born in sin," and that she was not cleansed from sin, as were the prophet Jeremias, and the baptist St John, but that she never had sin to be cleansed from, not even original sin, not even in her mother's womb; she was "preserved free from all stain of original sin." The current of sin's guilt, which runs through the human race as the blood through the body of a man, infecting and staining every soul of every child of Adam, as blood purples the veins through which it passes, was not allowed

to touch or sully Mary. He who said to the waves, "Peace, be calm, be still," bade the current stop when Mary was conceived in the womb, and would not allow it to touch her sacred soul. The sea of sin was divided at Mary's coming, and she passed through dry-shod. And the reason of it all? The unique privilege was given to her because of her unique position in the economy of God's providence. She alone was preserved from sin because God foreknew that she alone was to be the mother of His Son. The immaculate conception was due to the incarnate Word. The same may be said, and for the same reason, of Mary's after-life. She never incurred the guilt of even the slightest sin; she was "all fair" and "undefiled," because the Son of God was, according to His human nature, Mary's Son.

4. The crowning privilege of Mary's life, her assumption into heaven before the time fixed for the generality of Adam's race, was given to her, once more, because Jesus was her Son. He would not "allow His holy one to see corruption." He would not, that the body which had been His home should become "the food of rottenness and worms." Although the assumption of our Lord's mother —so beautifully described by St John Damascene, as he says, "from an ancient tradition"—has not been explicitly defined as an article of the Catholic faith, it would be "rash and temerarious" for a Catholic to question it, on account of the general consensus of the faithful, an agreement which the Church has sanctioned by establishing a solemn feast in its honour, and in making her own, in the office of the feast, the tradition quoted by St John Damascene of the corporal assumption of the mother into the kingdom of her Son. The only marvel in Mary's assumption is the anticipation of it before the great and general assumption day. We shall all be assumed; Mary was assumed before the rest of her race because she was an exception to her race. "I believe in the resurrection of

the body" is an article of our Creed. Mary had her resurrection a few years before her fellow-men. What God can do at the end of the world He can do at any period of its existence—any year, any day, any hour. Three days after our Lady's death He did for her what He will do for us at the end of time, He assumed her into heaven. This again was due, not to Mary as Mary the daughter of Joachim and Ann, but to Mary as the mother of God. It was a homage offered to Jesus. It was the crowning, not of the creature as a creature, but of Mary as the mother of God.

CHAPTER XXV

SACRED IMAGES AND PICTURES

1. We say *sacred* images and pictures, not that they are sacred in themselves, but because the scenes they portray, the events they commemorate, the persons they represent are sacred, that is, consecrated to God. The statue or representation in itself is nothing; it has eyes that see not, ears that hear not, lips that speak not, and it has no intellect at all. In it there is "no virtue on account of which [it] is to be worshipped'; "no petitions can be addressed to it"; "no trust is to be placed in it."[1] In itself it is only stone, or marble, or wood, or clay; its only value to us is that it is a representation, and that as such it reminds us of the one whom it portrays. It lifts up our hearts to him; spurs us on to imitate his life; inspires us to ask his prayers; keeps our mind from wandering thoughts; and thus leads us on to God. This is the *raison d'être* of images and pictures in the Catholic Church. This is the interpretation of the words of the Creed of Pope Pius IV, which have so frequently been misunderstood: "I most firmly assert that the images of Christ and of the mother of God, ever virgin, and also of other saints, ought to be had and retained, and that due honour and veneration are to be given to them."

The custom of having pictures and images in places of divine worship is an ancient one. At times, and in particular places, and under special circumstances, the use of images may have been discouraged. It was so discouraged at times under the old law, when there was a danger of the Jewish people falling into the sin of idolatry,

[1] Council of Trent, Sess. xxv. *De venerat. Rel. et Sac. Imag.*

as they actually did at the foot of Sinai at the very time when God was writing a commandment, not against the use, but against the worship of images: "Thou shalt not adore them, nor serve them." Under exceptional circumstances too, in Christian times, the Church has been slack in sanctioning their use, in the case especially of converts from idolatry, who, from force of long habit, might have been in danger of a relapse. But, as a rule, although there is no law of the Church ordering their use in private, she has approved, and sanctioned, and encouraged their use amongst the faithful in her consecrated temples. The use of images, like any other custom, both in Christian and in pre-Christian times, has been and is open to abuse, has been and may be abused. The Moabites worshipped the idol of Baal,[1] the Philistines adored Dagon,[2] the Israelites offered incense to a calf made of gold,[3] the Ephesians in St Paul's day worshipped Diana, and the silversmiths "brought no small gain" by "making silver temples for her";[4] the Lycaonians, in apostolic times too, had idols of Jupiter and Mercury,[5] and idol-worship was the religion of the Romans and Greeks and of most of the people other than the Jewish race. It is possible too that there may have been abuses at the time that the Iconoclasts, in the excess of their zeal for "pure worship," broke the statues in the holy places. But an abuse, here and there, now and again, is no argument against legitimate use; else sober men could never drink, and temperate men could never eat, because drink and food are abused, i.e., used to excess, by the glutton. Images and pictures have their legitimate use. Hence, whilst the Catholic Church condemns in unmeasured terms the abuse, and looks upon image *worship*, i.e., idolatry, not only as grave, but as the gravest of sins, she sanctions and encourages the lawful use of holy representations. We read of images and pictures in the

[1] 3 Kings xviii. [2] Judges xvi. [3] 3 Kings xii.
[4] Acts xix. [5] Acts xiv.

catacombs before the early Christians had churches at all. Figures of a dove representing the Holy Ghost, of a lamb representing the Son of God are seen there to this day. Rude carvings of the holy mother and the divine Child still exist as relics of the early practice. They were of frequent, though perhaps not universal, use in the succeeding ages. Our own Venerable Bede, in the eighth century, argues in their favour: "If it was lawful [he urges] to lift up on the wood the brazen serpent, so that those who gazed upon it might be cured, why should it not be right to have a representation of our Lord lifted up on the cross, upon which He conquered death, in order to refresh the minds of the faithful; or representations of His miracles and cures in which He also triumphed over the author of death? For those who look upon these pictures are often moved to sorrow; and to those who are ignorant and cannot read they teach the lesson of the history of our Lord." Then he argues that, if we could not make images without breaking God's commandment, Solomon would not have had figures of the cherubim and even of animals in the temple; God would not have ordered Moses to put the cherubim in the propitiatory, nor to exalt the serpent in the desert. From this he concludes that the commandment was not "Thou shalt not make images," but "Thou shalt not make images to be adored." Consequently, he says, we can have pictures or representations of our Lord; and if in the temple "they could have the figures of twelve oxen, why may not we have figures of the twelve apostles?"[1] In the eastern churches the *icon*, or image, whether of our Lord or of His holy mother, is venerated by all the people, each one kissing it during the service or as he leaves the church. In the Catholic Church throughout the world the value and usefulness of images as a help to devotion is universally recognized.

[1] *De Templo Salomonis*, cap. xix.

2. A picture or a statue appeals to our senses, and helps to keep the mind from wandering from sacred thoughts and holy things. Through our bodily senses impressions pass to the mind, especially through the eyes, which have been called "the windows of the soul." If we have nothing definite upon which to fix our gaze, our eyes roam about in search of something; the mind roams with the eyes, and distracting or wandering thoughts are the natural consequence. Whereas if we fix our eyes upon a picture or an image, whether of our Lord, or of His Mother, or of a saint, the impression of the one represented is conveyed to the imagination, from the imagination to the mind, and from the mind to the heart. The imagination is kept from going astray, the mind is steadied, and the heart goes out to God, either directly or through His holy servants.

This is the philosophy of external representations. This is the meaning of our having statues of our heroes and heroines, our philanthropists and distinguished men. We have pictures and photographs of our relations and friends for the same reason. These artificial representations keep us from forgetting, they remind us, they make us think of those who are absent or who, perhaps, have gone to their eternal home. How much more easily do we concentrate our thoughts upon our absent friends, if we have their portrait before our eyes. It makes them live in our presence; we can see them in the reproduction; we can imagine that they are looking at us and listening to us; we can almost hear them speak. We talk of "a speaking" likeness: this is what we mean. Here we have the reason of pictures and images; it is to help us to see God, His mother, His saints; to converse with them; to draw near to them in confidence and love. If we wish to follow our Lord, step by step, scene by scene, in His sacred passion, and to meditate upon His love for men, what a help it is to us to go from "station" to "station" and look upon the sacred incidents of the sorrowful journey to Calvary,

represented on canvas or in stone! The representations carry us back through space and time. They make us forget that the world has grown older by nineteen hundred years, and they bring Jerusalem and Calvary into our own church, into our own home. St Jerome said of St Paula—and we can understand the meaning of his words—that on occasion of her visit to the holy sepulchre: "Prostrate before the cross she worshipped, as though she saw the Lord hanging thereon."[1] If *we* wish to speak to Christ crucified, the *figure* uplifted before our eyes raises our minds to *Him*. If we would think of the Mother, her statue helps to balance our thoughts. If we desire the prayers and intercession of a saint, his picture in front of us prevents our thoughts from wandering elsewhere.

When, in the sixteenth century, this practice of having images as a help to our prayers, with so many other customs and doctrines sanctified by ages, and followed by God's holy children, was abolished in England, the cult, or use of images, did not cease. The second of the Homilies was written "against the perils of idolatry"; but it was only the images of *holy* people that were put under the unholy ban. The statues of England's great, but oftentimes unholy, dead, took the place of the statues of saints. As the ashes of the saints were thrown to the winds and their relics were scattered in the dust, the cathedrals and abbey churches became the cemeteries and catacombs of England's unholy dead. Relics of sinners took the place of relics of saints, and God's temple, where "the bodies of His holy ones were buried in peace," whose "names shall live for ever," became, in a literal sense, "outwardly beautiful, but, within, full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness." It was not a war against images, but a war against the images of holy people. The inconsistency of the iconoclasts of those days is revealed in a passage which occurs in the state papers of the time of Edward VI. The

[1] Ep. xxvii, *Ad Eustochium, Epitaphium Paulæ Matris.*

Protector, in a letter to Bishop Gardiner, writes: "We have to provide, on the one hand, that the *king's images*, arms and ensigns be honoured and worshipped after the decent order and invention of human laws and ceremonies; and, on the other hand, that *other images* be not partakers of that reverence, adoration and invocation, which derogate from the honour of God." The absurdity of iconoclasm is seen in the beautiful Lady Chapel of Ely Cathedral, where the images of the saints were defaced or broken, and the image of the devil remained unhurt.

3. A further object and legitimate use of images in our churches is that they may "point a moral," and be a lesson to us and to ours; that we may look to those whom they represent as to our guides. They are "sermons in stone." In our streets and squares, in our palaces and museums, we erect statues to our heroes who have gone. They are object lessons in history, in philanthropy, in bravery, or in loyalty to country and king. They are an encouragement to others to emulate their noble, or philanthropic, or patriotic deeds. We point them out to our children, and we tell them who and what they were, in order that they may be incited to a laudable ambition and to imitate their noble lives. Jesus Christ is our model, our "way," and "truth" and "life." We raise His image on high in our churches and chapels, in our oratories and our homes; in Catholic lands, in the streets and public places, in country lanes, on village greens, and in wayside shrines, that all may see, and hear, and learn. "I have given you an example, that as I have done, you should do in like manner." Mary, the Mother of God, was His perfect creature, His *chef-d'œuvre*, His "only one." We have her image that, with her, we may learn to be humble, and that, through humility, we may be "exalted." The saints were ideal Christians. We have their pictures to spur us on to

[1] Quoted by Dr Lee, *Edward VI.* Note to page 87.

image that, with her, we may learn to be humble, and that, through humility, we may be "exalted." The saints were ideal Christians. We have their pictures to spur us on to study their lives, and in our own lives realize the ideal life of a saint.

4. If we honour a statue or a picture, if we deck it with flowers, and light candles around it, and set it upon a beautiful altar of marble or stone: what then? It is not the lifeless stone, the dead clay, the inanimate canvas that we venerate. No, it is to the living, throbbing, loving saint in heaven, who is represented on earth in his image, that we offer our candles, our flowers, our prayers, our love, that he in turn may offer them for us to God. We teach our children this lesson in these words:

> The sacred homage that we pay
> To Mary's image here;
> To Mary's self—then on to God,
> Ascends the starry sphere.

Who would think of accusing a loving mother, when she reverently places a wreath of flowers at the feet of the reclining effigy or on the tomb of her departed son, of venerating the cold marble? It is a graceful act of affectionate remembrance of one whom she still holds dear. Who speaks in condemnation of the crowds who offer his favourite flower at the statue of Lord Beaconsfield on April 19 of each year, or who would dare to say that, like the ancient Romans, they are making an idol of the ideal representative of their political creed? If we kiss a photograph of a mother, of a father, or of one whose memory we still cherish, is it not perfectly understood as a mark of affection, not to the representation, but to the man, the woman or the child, who formed part of our life, or lived in our hearts, when alive? When a witness kisses the leather cover of a bible in a court of law, all the world knows that it is not the leather, or the paper, or yet the print, but God's word to which he shows respect. So it is with us who are Catholics. The saints are God's friends, Mary is His

own mother; they are our friends and brothers, and she is our mother. We have their images, their pictures, that we may not forget them, and that they may not forget us. We show outward acts of reverence to these images, the interior spirit gives life to those outward acts, and lifts them up to heaven. There is nothing reprehensible in the outward act, any more than there is in the interior spirit, which is to the act as its very soul. When Josue "fell flat on the ground before the ark of the Lord until the evening, he and all the ancients of Israel";[1] when he "had worshipped bowing down to the ground" before "the Prince of the host of the Lord";[2] when the courtier makes a lowly obeisance before a king or a queen; when in our own House of Lords, peers of the realm bow to an empty royal throne, who chides? who blames? who cries out "idolatry and sin"? We Catholics do nothing worse. Our reverence is only a relative one: it is because saints are the sons of God; our reverence to a statue is not to the representation, but to the one who is represented in the marble or stone.

If you go into a gallery of paintings and take a masterpiece of art, a picture by Fra Angelico, or by Rubens, or by Raphael, and turn its face to the wall, the picture to you will appear unsightly, daubed with paint, begrimed with the dust of years. But turn it round; look at it as it is intended to be seen, with its back to the wall and its face to the looker on, it is "a thing of beauty," an "inspiration," a "dream"; it preaches a sermon; it teaches a lesson; it raises mind and heart to God in admiration, and maybe in love. When people come to our Catholic churches they morally turn our pictures to the wall. They look at the wrong side of things. They listen to what our enemies have to say. They read *their* description of Catholics, and not Catholics' descriptions of themselves. It is the lion painted by man; not painted by the lion. They are fed with garbled extracts from our books, which depend for their explanation on the context, which is carefully sup-

[1] Josue vii, 6. [2] Josue v, 15.

pressed. They see our rites and ceremonies, our statues and pictures, our candles and flowers, our holy water and incense; they do not understand these things, and they will not ask us Catholics: "*Manhu*? What does it mean?" They ask a non-Catholic, an anti-Catholic by preference, they read books in which our religion is travestied and held up to ridicule and scorn, and then they form their opinions about us and about what we do; and the opinions once formed are difficult indeed to change. In this question of images and pictures we Catholics are perfectly consistent, and we most certainly know what they mean. They are helps to God, instead of being, as some imagine, hindrances on our way to Him. The honour paid to an image is an honour given to the saint who is imaged; the honour given to the saint is honour given to God, to whom he owes his sanctity; the honour consequently given to an image, even of a saint, is an honour meant for God. A prayer made to a saint is a prayer offered through the saint, and strengthened by the saint's prayer, to the one only and ever-living God. So that in this Catholic practice, as indeed in all the devotions and practices of the Catholic Church, "Christ is above all, and through all, and in us all."[1] The Catholic Church is the true exponent of Catholic truth. And here is the Church's exposition: "The images of Christ, and of His virgin mother, and of other saints, are to be had and retained, especially in churches, and a due honour and veneration is to be given to them; not that any divinity or virtue is believed to be in them, or that any prayer is to be made to them, as was formerly done by the heathens, who placed their hopes in idols; but because the honour which is given to them is referred to the originals whom they represent; so that by the images which we kiss, and before which we uncover our heads, or kneel, we *adore Christ*, and venerate His saints, whose likeness they represent."[2]

[1] Eph. iv, 6.

[2] Council of Trent, sess. xxv. *De venerat. Rel. et sac. imag.*

CHAPTER XXVI

PURGATORY AND PRAYER FOR THE DEAD

1. THE existence of purgatory—a place, that is, where after death souls suffer for a time, that they may satisfy for, and be cleansed from lesser sins which are unforgiven, or where they may pay the penalty of penance, not yet paid, for sins that have been, as to their guilt, forgiven—is called for by, and is a tribute to, God's attributes of sanctity, justice and merciful love. The all-holy God cannot allow even the slightest stain in His sacred presence, and so "nothing defiled can enter heaven."[1] When sin entered there the sin and the sinners were cast out by Michael and his angels, who fought with the dragon and *his* angels, and the sinners "prevailed not"; they were "cast out," "neither was their place found any more in heaven."[2] When Adam and Eve offended God, "the Lord sent him out of the paradise of pleasure," and placed before it "cherubim and a flaming sword, turning every way" to bar their return.[3] So is it now, "there shall not enter in anything defiled."[4] The justice of God demands that meet punishments and rewards should be given to each soul according to the merits of each. Divine mercy punishes those who are not "cast away," gently and sweetly, not more than, nor longer than the claims of justice demand.

The Catholic doctrine regarding punishments and rewards is as reasonable as it is simple, and it commends itself to the intellect of every thinking man. It is this. If a soul leaves this world spotless and pure and unburdened with spiritual debt, either because it has preserved its innocence and has never incurred the debt of punishment

[1] Apoc. xxi, 27. [2] Apoc. xii, 8. [3] Gen. iii, 23, 24. [4] Apoc. xxi, 27.

due to sin, or because, having incurred debt, it has paid the penalty by penance or satisfaction, and having contracted sin, it has sued for and obtained pardon; that soul enters at once into rest after labour, it is crowned at once, since the battle has been fought valiantly, and the crown has been won. If, however, a soul, when its hour comes and it is called away, is weighed down with grievous unforgiven sin, for which it has neither asked nor obtained mercy, such a soul, held down by the weight of sin, cannot rise to heaven, and by God's justice and its own unworthiness is committed to that eternal prison of hell, from which there is no redemption. In the third place, if a soul departs this life free from grievous or deadly sin, and yet sullied by the stain of venial sin, or not having paid the debt of temporal punishment due to sin even though its guilt has been forgiven, this soul *cannot* go to heaven, as it is "defiled," and it *need* not go hell, for its sin is neither grievous nor deadly. What then? Catholic theology teaches, and it is an article of Catholic faith, that there is a third place, which we call purgatory, where it goes for a time to be purified from its sin, as gold is separated in the crucible from dross or base metal, and where, too, it can suffer, and by its penance satisfy for sin, which it neglected to do when in the world of men. To His goodness God owes that the work of His hand shall not perish, that they who cry for mercy and have not lost His love shall not be cast away, that they who have not abandoned hope shall "not be confounded for ever." To His sanctity He owes that they who are not pure or stainless shall not, as they are, enter into His immediate presence, into that light in which the slightest shadow of sin is seen. To His justice it is due that they who have forgotten Him ever so little from motives of pleasure and love of self, shall return to Him by purifying penance either in this life or when this life has gone. He owes it in fine to His mercy that He should listen to their cry for mercy and love, and that He should

not turn a deaf ear to us, His children, when we plead for them, that He would grant them peace and rest.

The very souls themselves leaving this world, not prepared for heaven, would not wish to enter into eternal rest any more than we should wish to go into the presence of our sovereign on a court festival day in our ordinary work-a-day clothes. It is on record that St Anselm said that he would "rather be innocent in hell than enter heaven stained with the slightest stain." St Thomas[1] gives the reason: "An innocent soul would not feel the pains of hell, and a guilty soul could not enjoy the bliss of heaven." St Catherine of Genoa goes further, and adds that a soul in sin would feel itself aggrieved, and that an injustice had been done to it, if it were introduced into heaven, which to it, in its sullied state, would be worse than ten purgatories. Cardinal Newman, in his "Dream of Gerontius," represents such a soul pleading with its guiding spirit:

Take me away, and in the lowest deep,
There let me be,
And there in hope the lone night-watches keep
Told out for me.
There motionless and happy in my pain,
Lone not forlorn,
There will I sing my sad perpetual strain
Until the morn.
There will I sing and soothe my stricken breast,
Which ne'er can cease
To throb, and pine, and languish till I possess
Of its sole peace.
There will I sing my absent Lord and Love:
Take me away,
That sooner I may rise and go above,
And see Him in the truth of everlasting day.

The soul could not be happy in heaven. It would be as if we were to try with our weak eyes to gaze upon the bright dazzling sun, or as if, with weak frail bodies and worn-out

[1] *In Quolibet*, L. a. 9.

strength, we should try to climb steep high mountains thousands of feet above the level of the sea, or as if with feeble lungs we should endeavour to sing to the roaring waves of a tempestuous sea. God owes purgatory to Himself, and, in a sense, to the souls in lesser sin.

2. This doctrine of purgatory—which, to the Catholic, is no poetical fancy, but an article of his faith, defined by councils [1] and embodied in the Creed [2]—commends itself to reason, as it is in accordance with our conceived idea of human justice. According to our civil law one who has been guilty of a very grievous crime, say murder, is considered absolutely unfit to live with his fellow-men, and so he is put out of life. Another is tried, and, being found innocent, is not punished at all, his liberty is restored to him. A third is guilty of a lesser crime, he has stolen a small sum of money perhaps; he is not put to death, he is not let off free, but he is put into prison *for a time* to pay the penalty of his lesser crime, and then he can join the innocent man who was found guiltless before the judge. The putting out of life is the human hell—eternal banishment from the innocent and the good; prison is our human purgatory—punishment for a time; liberty is man's paradise, the gift that he values above all natural gifts, if we except the supreme gift of life. So in divine justice, a soul has been and is still guilty, obstinately guilty of grievous, deadly sin—its portion is eternal fire. Another is perfectly innocent, absolutely stainless and pure—heaven is its natural, its congenial home. A third is guilty of venial, pardonable, lesser sin. Where is it to go, what is to be its home? Heaven, with angels all pure, saints all holy, Mary all fair, the eternal God, sanctity itself? No, God's justice and holiness could not tolerate that, nor would the soul itself wish it so. What then? Is it to go with the murderer, the adulterer, the blasphemer, the

[1] Councils of Florence and Trent. [2] Creed of Pope Pius IV.

impenitent and hardened sinner? No, God's justice does not demand it, His mercy cannot allow it. What happens? Where is it to find a home? Like the man on earth guilty of a lesser crime it must go to prison for a time to do penance, to expiate its sin, to be cleansed from the defilement of earth. This prison we call purgatory.

So reasonable does this doctrine of purgatory appear, that it seems hardly to need revelation to declare it. Belief in a just and merciful God leads the reason to this creation of merciful justice. Heathens who have not known the "one, true God, and Him whom He has sent, Jesus Christ," from their innate ideas of the nature of their god or gods in whom they have believed, have reasoned out a purgatory, though they did not know it by that name. Virgil's words, with a few alterations suggested by theology, might easily pass as the singing of a Christian poet:

> Nor death itself can hardly wash their stains,
> But long contracted filth e'en in the soul remains,
> The relics of inveterate vice they wear;
> And spots of sin defiled in every face appear.
> For this are various penances enjoined,
> And some are hung to bleach upon the wind;
> Some plunged in waters, others purged in fires,
> Till all the dregs are drained, all the rust expires.
> . . . . . .
> Then are they happy, when by length of time
> The scurf is worn away of each committed crime;
> No speck is left of their habitual stains,
> And the pure ether of the soul remains.[1]

3. The scripture argument for purgatory is well known. The name "purgatory" does not occur in holy writ any more than the word "Trinity" or "Incarnation"; but the idea conveyed by the word is found in several places. We have the declaration of our Lord: "Whoever shall

[1] *Æneid*, lib. VI. Dryden's translation.

speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but he that shall speak against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, either in this world or in the next."[1] Some sins then are to be forgiven in the next world. But where? Not in heaven, *there* no sin can enter; not in hell, *there* there is "no redemption"; therefore in the prison-house of the King, which we choose to call purgatory. On another occasion our Lord speaks of this prison from which there will be deliverance, but only when the injustice has been expiated: "Be at peace with thy adversary betimes . . . . lest perhaps he deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison. Amen I say to thee, thou shalt not go from thence till thou pay the last farthing."[2] St Cyprian, writing in the third century, interprets this as meaning purgatory: "It is one thing to stand for pardon, another to arrive at glory; one thing being cast into prison and not to go out from thence till the last farthing be paid; and another to receive at once the reward of faith and courage; one thing being tortured by long anguish for sin, to be long cleansed and purged by fire, another to have purged all sins by suffering; lastly, one thing to wait in suspense the day of judgement for the sentence of the Lord, another to be at once crowned by the Lord."[3] Then we have St Paul's words to the Corinthians with St Ambrose's commentary: "The fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work burn, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved yet so as by fire."[4] St Ambrose quotes these words more than once, and each time applies them to purgatory. "He will be saved, the apostle says, because his substance shall remain, but his bad doctrine shall perish. Therefore he said, 'Yet so as by

[1] Matt. xii, 32. [2] Matt. v, 25, 26.
[3] *Ep.* 55, *ad Antonianum* (Library of Fathers).
[4] 1 Cor. iii, 13, 14.

fire,' in order that his salvation be understood not to be without pain. He shows that he shall be saved indeed, but he shall undergo the pain of fire and be thus purified, not like the unbelieving and wicked man who shall be punished in everlasting fire."[1] Origen a century earlier (he was born in A.D. 185, and died A.D. 254) citing the same text had explained it in the same manner: "When we depart this life, if we take with us virtues or vices, shall we receive reward for our virtues, and shall those trespasses be forgiven us which we knowingly committed?" he asks, "or shall we be punished for our faults and not receive the reward of our virtues?" This is his appeal to the justice of God. Now see how he answers his own question. "Neither is true; because we shall suffer for our sins and receive the rewards of our good actions. For if on the foundation of Christ you shall have built not only gold and silver and precious stones, but also wood, and hay, and stubble, what do you expect when the soul shall be separated from the body? Would you enter into heaven with your wood, and hay, and stubble to defile the kingdom of God? or on account of these encumbrances remain without and receive no reward for your gold and silver and precious stones? Neither is this just. It remains then that you be committed to the fire, which shall consume the light materials; for our God, to those who can comprehend heavenly things, is called a *consuming fire.* But this fire consumes not the creature, but what the creature has himself built—wood and hay and stubble. It is manifest that in the first place the fire destroys the wood of our transgressions, and then returns to us the reward of our good works."[2] This is a second or early third century exposition of the doctrine of purgatory, and it is one with the Catholic exposition which is made to-day. St Gregory

[1] *Comment. in* 1 *Ep. ad Cor.*
[2] *Hom.* xvi, *in Jerem.* n. 5, 6. (Migne Edit.)

of Nyssa explains the doctrine in almost precisely the same words. He speaks of man contracting sins and then desiring to be rid of them either "in this life being renewed," or "in the next being expiated by the purging fire," that he may "recover the state of happiness which he had lost." "When he has quitted this body, he cannot be admitted to approach the Divinity till the *purging* fire shall have expiated the stains with which his soul was infected."[1] Again, we have the Catholic doctrine and almost the very name of purgatory. St Basil speaks of the words of Isaias: "And the people shall be as the fuel of the fire," as being "not a threat of extermination, but it denotes *purgation by the divine fire*";[2] according to the expression of the apostle . . . . *he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire.*

4. It will be noticed in the words, both of holy writ, of the liturgies, and of the venerable doctors of the Church, which are quoted on the doctrine of purgatory, that, although "fire" is frequently mentioned, nothing is defined as to the kind of fire, its nature, its intensity, or its duration. Nothing is defined by the Church upon the subject. Scripture speaks of "fire," so do the fathers of the Church, and the Church quotes their words, without binding her children to any narrow or restricted interpretation of the meaning of the word. The same may be said of the *locale* of purgatory. If we are asked, "Where is purgatory?" we may answer, "I do not know." It exists, this of faith; where it exists, what are its precise punishments, how long are souls detained there, the Church defines nothing, nor are we bound to accept the revelations, or supposed revelations, of pious women, or even of saints, upon the subject. "I believe in the Catholic *Church*" is the Catholic's Creed. He does not profess belief in the writings or sayings of

[1] Quoted by Cardinal Wiseman, lect. XI on "The Catholic Church."

[2] *Com. in Isa.* ix.

individual Catholics, however holy or learned they may be. In this matter of purgatory, the question of *place* is an open one. Is it in the clouds? in the great star worlds? in the sun, the moon, the planets? Is it above the clouds? or in the deep abyss? beneath our feet and above the feet of our brethren at the antipodes? Is it in our houses, our cities, our streets? Are souls like the ghost of Hamlet's father—

> Doomed for a certain time to walk the night,
> And for the day confined to fast in fires,
> Till the foul crimes done in my days of nature
> Are burnt and purged away?

To one and all these questions there is but one answer: "We do not know." And if we must add a word to that answer, it is the word of St Augustine, written upon another subject: "Do not be over anxious to know, if you do not wish to fall into error." This is the safe advice of the fathers of the Council of Trent, who, whilst they exhort the bishops to preach "the sound doctrine of purgatory handed down by the holy fathers and the councils," admonish them to refrain "in popular discourses" from "more difficult and subtle questions which do not tend to edification," and bid them "prohibit the publication and discussion of things which are doubtful or even appear not to be true."[1]

5. Instead of discussing "subtle questions" the Catholic would do better to pray for the souls in purgatory. For we believe in the efficacy of prayer; it is part of that article of the Creed in which we profess our belief in "the communion of saints." Although the twenty-second article of the "thirty-nine" enumerates purgatory amongst the "Romish doctrines" which are "vainly invented, grounded upon no warranty of scripture," and "repugnant to the word of God," it is interesting to note, as one of the signs of the times, that in his recent "Visitation Charge,"[2] the Archbishop of Canterbury said: "To pray for the dead is not

[1] *Decret. de Purg.*, sess. xxv. [2] 1898. Part II.

forbidden by the New Testament, and it is not forbidden by the Church of England, and our ecclesiastical courts have accordingly so decided it." His Grace then makes a subtle distinction, which Catholics can hardly appreciate: "In our *private* prayers there is nothing in the Church of England teaching to forbid our prayers for those whom we love, and who have gone before us; but in our *public* worship there is need of that kind of reverence, which *restrains the language*, and which perpetually acknowledges our own ignorance." To us it seems like saying: "You may pray, but don't speak too loud, lest you shock others who do not believe as you." It is either right or wrong to pray for the dead. If wrong, then we must be silent in private as well as in public; if right, why hold our tongues in our public services? The Catholic Church has ever believed in the practical efficacy of prayer for the dead. Her principle has ever been: "When the dead is at rest, let his remembrance remain, and comfort him in the departure of his spirit."[1] God is the universal Father, the Father of children fighting on earth, suffering in purgatory, and rejoicing in heaven. The Church is the universal mother of these same children fighting here, suffering in exile, and happy in the Father's home. We, the children, here plead for our exiled brothers and sisters; and our brothers who have entered into rest, and are enjoying the inheritance of our Father and theirs, pray for us who are waiting "till the day breaks" and there is for us "in the morning gladness."

The argument in favour of prayer for the dead is partly a scriptural one; but it is especially an argument from tradition. It appears to have been a Jewish practice in pre-Christian times, as it is to-day, to pray for the dead.[2] Their modern prayer-books contain prayers for

[1] Ecclus xxxviii, 24. [2] "The special prayers offered up on such occasions (funerals) include . . . petitions for the wellbeing of the soul of the deceased, that it may find divine mercy when appearing before the supreme Judge," etc. "Whenever we mention the name of a deceased friend or relative, we add, as a mark of respect

the dead, and they are not likely to have learned the doctrine and practice from Christians, from whom, in matters of religion, they have ever studiously and scrupulously kept aloof. It can only be accounted for as being a Jewish tradition. We have the well-known instance recorded in the Second Book of Maccabees,[1] telling how Judas Maccabeus, "after a hard fight, in which, by the help of God, they got the victory," "making a gathering, (i.e., a collection,) sent twelve thousand drachms of silver to Jerusalem for sacrifice to be offered for the sins of the dead, thinking well and religiously concerning the resurrection. For if he had not hoped that they that were slain should rise again, it would have seemed superfluous and vain to pray for the dead. And because he considered that they who had fallen asleep with godliness had great grace laid up for them. It is therefore a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from sins." The reply generally given by those who oppose the doctrine, so clearly laid down in this text, is that this Book of Maccabees is not inspired, and is not found in the canon of scripture recognized by the Protestant Church. For the sake of argument be it so. Even supposing it were not an inspired book, at least it has the value of being a contemporary history, and so is at all events *historical* evidence of a Jewish tradition. It is found in the Protestant bible amongst the Apocrypha, as such we may quote it, at least as history, and we may cite the particular words given above as a convincing testimony of a tradition existing amongst the Jewish people at the time that the book was written, even though it be but an historical treatise, and not the inspired word of God. Catholics, however, accept the book, and believe in its inspiration. They do so on the same ground upon which non-Catholics, as well as children

(*in Hebrew, here given*): 'Peace be unto him' (her or them) . . . or 'His rest be Eden' (Eden being the symbol of human happiness in perfection."—*The Jewish Religion*, by M. Friedlander, pp. 496, 223, 497. [1] 2 Macc. xii.

of the Church, accept the Gospel of St Matthew or the Epistles of St Paul, viz., that it has been handed down as canonical by the Church, and as such has been quoted by some of the early fathers and writers of the Church. We therefore look upon the words, not merely as evidence of a traditional belief, but as the words of God's inspiration, If we do not find in the Old Testament many texts on the subject of purgatory, or prayer for the dead, it proves nothing. It was a tradition amongst the Jews, and they did not write controversial books for the benefit of the Gentiles. They had not received a commission to teach the nations. Coming to the New Testament, we have St Paul in the Second Epistle to Timothy[1] praying for Onesiphorus "because he hath often refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain." "The Lord grant to him to find mercy of the Lord on that day." Dr Döllinger remarks on this text that "the Ephesian Onesiphorus mentioned in the Second Epistle to Timothy was clearly no longer among the living. St Paul praises him for his service, but does not, as elsewhere, send salutations to him, but only to his family."[2] As the learned doctor reminds us, at the end of the epistle the apostle sends greetings to his friends by name, but only "to the *household* of Onesiphorus,"[3] implying that his friend was amongst the faithful dead.

As we have said, the chief argument in favour of prayer for the dead is the fact of its having always, and almost everywhere, been the universal belief and practice of Christendom. One of the very earliest Christian writers in the Latin Church, Tertullian, takes it for granted that "we offer on one day every year oblations for the dead as birthday honours."[4] In the Eastern Church we have St Ephrem's petition for prayers to be said for him after his death. In his "Testament" he writes: "My brethren come to me, and prepare me for my departure, for my

[1] 2 Tim. i, 16-18. [2] *First Age of the Church*, p. 251.
[3] 2 Tim. iv, 19. [4] *De Corona* v, 3.

strength is wholly gone. Go along with me in psalms and in your prayers, and please constantly make oblations for me. When the thirtieth day shall be completed, then remember me; for the dead are helped by the prayers of the living. If also the sons of Mathathias, who celebrated their feasts in figure only, could cleanse from guilt by their offerings those who fell in battle, how much more shall the priests of Christ aid the dead by their oblations and prayers."[1] There is an unfailing continuity of doctrine on this subject, a universal *consensus* of teaching in the writings of the doctors of the Church in all countries and in all the ages of the Church. The only difficulty is in the selection, not in the citing, of texts such as we have already given. St Gregory of Nyssa, St Cyril of Jerusalem, St Ambrose of Milan, our own Venerable Bede, who exacted a promise from his brethren when he was dying that they would pray and say Masses for him when he was gone, St Thomas, St Bernard, and countless other saints have written in the same doctrinal strain, and have professed the same belief in the efficacy of prayer for the faithful departed.

The early liturgies, to which we have so frequently referred as evidence of continuity of teaching with our own, or rather of our continuity with theirs, are all full of the same thought, and have the same expressions of faith, confidence and love, that are breathed in our Roman liturgy to-day. They all embody the Church's teaching; they are object lessons to her children, they are her visible theology. Thus, in the liturgy of St Mark, the rubric prescribes that the deacon "should read the diptychs of the departed," i.e., the double tablets or board-books of two leaves containing the names of the deceased prelates, benefactors and others who had died in membership with the Church. "Then the priest bows down, and prays:

[1] *In Testament.*

'And to the spirit of all these give rest, our Master, Lord and God, in the tabernacle of the saints. . . . Grant rest to their souls, and vouchsafe to them the kingdom of heaven.'" The late Dr Neale, an Anglican, who, in the introduction to his "Translations of the Primitive Liturgies," tells his readers that for nearly twenty years these liturgies had been his daily study, at the end of the book[1] gives a collection of many beautiful prayers, which occur in each of these offices of the Church, in most of which reference is made to the offering of the Mass for the dead. Thus in St Basil's, or the *Copto-Jacobite* liturgy, it is said: "O Lord, remember those who have fallen asleep. . . . Vouchsafe to give rest to all their souls. . . . Bring them in, and collect them in a place of greenness by the water of comfort in the paradise of pleasure, where grief and misery and sighing are banished in the brightness of thy saints." In the *Syro-Jacobite* liturgy (St Ignatius): "Placidly and tranquilly receive, through Thy goodness, O Lord, the souls and spirits of Thy servants . . . . who have departed to Thee out of this life; but chiefly them for whom . . . . this sacrifice is offered and perfected." And so in the other liturgies such prayers are frequent: "Grant, O Lord, rest to their souls whom we commemorate, and write their names in the book of life." "Gladden them with the aspect of Thy countenance; set them in the region of the righteous." "Examine them not severely. . . . Deal mercifully with them because of the errors to which this flesh, made of clay and subject to sin, is liable." "Deliver them from the burnings of gehenna." "Blot out, forgive, and remit all their sins, known and unknown, voluntary and involuntary." "Visit them, and console them, O Lord, in the habitation in which they rest by Thy divine dispensation . . . . by this mystical sacrifice, full of all blessed hope, Lord receive our

[1] Appendix II.

prayers for them, and blot out their sins and defects and purify their defects." All these are invocations, taken at haphazard, from the collection to which reference has been made, and all are clear and emphatic expositions both of the Church's dogmatic teaching and of her ever-consistent practical belief in purgatory and prayer for the dead. All are proof-positive of the unity of faith and of practice of the Church in the early ages and in our own. The practice and faith are summed up in the ninth book of St Augustine's Confessions, where he tells us that when his mother, St Monica, was dying she said: "Bury my body where you will; let not that be a trouble to you; only one thing I ask of you, and that is, wherever you may be always remember me at the altar of God." And as St Augustine prayed for his mother, so does the Church pray for her children: "May she rest in peace with the husband, before and after whom she never had any. And inspire, O Lord my God, inspire thy servants my brethren, my sons, my masters .... that so many as shall read these confessions may at Thy altar remember Monica, Thy handmaid. . . . May they with devout affection remember my parents in this transitory light, my brethren under Thee our Father in our Catholic mother .... that so my mother's last request of me .... may be more abundantly fulfilled to her."[1]

[1] *Confessions*, Book IX, 27, 37.

CHAPTER XXVII

INDULGENCES

1. Few tenets of Catholic teaching have been more persistently mis-stated, few more consistently misunderstood by those who are "not of us" than the doctrine of indulgences or, as they are called by earlier writers, *pardons*. Let us say at once that an indulgence does not mean the forgiveness of sin, much less does it mean permission to commit sin; the former, i.e., the pardon of sin, is given to those who are properly disposed to receive it by the two sacraments of baptism and penance; the latter, i.e., leave to commit sin, no pope, no Church, not even God Himself, could grant. "The Catechism of Christian Doctrine," which is the religious text-book of the children in Catholic schools, asks the question: "What is an indulgence?" and the answer given is: "An indulgence is a remission of the temporal punishment which often remains due to sin after its guilt has been forgiven." An indulgence does not grant but pre-supposes the pardon of the guilt or malice or wickedness of sin; it comes in "*after* the guilt has been forgiven." It does not take away, or in any way touch or refer to, the eternal punishment due to every soul when, and as long as, it has upon it the stain, or *macula*, of grievous or mortal sin. St Thomas lays down clearly as the teaching of the Church that "Indulgences are of no avail to those who are in actual grievous sin. Therefore it is [he adds] that in the granting of indulgences it is always stated that they are given upon the conditions of contrition and confession." The reason of this is, according to the angelic doctor, because "no man can have the penalty of the sin remitted as long as he is in the sin. If he does not receive from God Himself the forgiveness of the sin, he cannot

receive from God's minister the remission of the punishment due to the sin."[1] An indulgence only pretends to remit the debt of *temporal* punishment due to sin when the guilt of the sin has been already pardoned by God. A *plenary* indulgence means the remission, in its entirety, of all the temporal punishment incurred by the sinner; a *partial* indulgence, the cancelling of a portion of such temporal pain; an indulgence of forty days or a hundred days would mean the remission of a penance or punishment of forty or a hundred days duration, or its equivalent in this world or in the world of suffering beyond the grave. Even when the "wickedness of the sin," as David calls it, is forgiven by the love of a merciful Saviour, even when no guilt or malice remains, there are effects and consequences, debts and penalties, still remaining—the scars of wounds that have healed:

> Wounds of the soul, though healed, will ache,
> The reddening scars remain, and make
> Confession;
> Lost innocence returns no more,
> We are not what we were before
> Transgression.

2. For the elucidation of the vexed question of indulgences four questions should be clearly understood: (1) The meaning of temporal punishment; (2) the discipline of the early Christian Church, or the system of canonical penances which prevailed in the early Christian centuries; (3) the signification of the term, "the treasury of the Church," as used by Catholic theologians; (4) the necessity we are under of making "satisfaction," or doing penance, for sin.

(1) Every time a man deliberately sins, he offends against God's law; that offence implies guilt, the guilt calls for punishment. As we say that "virtue is its own reward," so may we sometimes say that "sin is its own

[1] *Suppl.* 3ª pars, qu. xxvii, 1.

punishment"—sometimes, but not always. If it does not bring its own punishment, punishment must be inflicted as reparation for the sin, either voluntarily by the culprit, or by some external authority, whether human or divine. A glutton often suffers physical pain as a consequence of his sin, an impure man incurs bodily and mental shame, an angry man feels when his anger has passed self-humiliation and degradation. Other sins, although they bring with them none of these visible or tangible consequences, still they inherit temporal suffering as a penalty for their evil doing. This penalty must be paid. We leave God by self-love or from love of pleasure; we must make amends to Him by self-humiliation and penance. This is the explanation of the hard, rude penances of the saints—the breast of St Jerome wounded by the bruising with a hard stone, the scourgings of St Dominic, the voluntary solitude of St Mary Magdalene and St Mary of Egypt, the furrowed cheeks of St Peter the effects of the scalding tears. This is the meaning of the penitential seasons of the Church, Lent, Advent, vigils and the rest. Even though we may have repented of sin, we owe this reparation to God. A mother pardons her child, but she gives it a penance for its sin. A friend forgives his erring friend, but he expects satisfaction at his hand. The law pardons the felon, but not till he has expiated his crime. God in like manner forgives His penitent child, but He demands punishment for his sin. David had sinned; he had been guilty of a twofold sin; Nathan the prophet makes him realize his sin: "I have sinned against the Lord." David repented of his wrong-doing, and God pardons his guilt: "The Lord hath taken away thy sin, thou shalt not die." Yet, though God has forgiven the sin, the debt of temporal punishment must be paid. "Nevertheless . . . . the child that is born unto thee shall surely die . . . . and it came to pass on the seventh day the child died."[1] The sin of

[1] 2 Kings xii, 18.

Adam and Eve again exemplifies the doctrine of temporal punishment. They sinned; they repented; they admitted the wrong which they had done. God pardoned them; yet the debt of temporal punishment remained. "Cursed is the earth in thy work," God said to Adam; "with labour and toil shalt thou eat thereof . . . . thorns and thistles it shall bring forth unto thee." Then to Eve God said: "I will multiply thy sorrows . . . . in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children . . . . thou shalt be under thy husband's power."[1] Now if God had removed this "curse" entirely from Adam, it would have been what we understand by a "plenary indulgence"; if He had relieved him of it for forty days, it would have been a "forty days' indulgence." If a criminal is imprisoned for life and then his sentence is remitted by the sovereign, it is a human plenary indulgence; if he is sentenced to spend three years in gaol and at the end of a year receives a free pardon, it is a two years' indulgence. If the Church grants an indulgence, i.e., a remission of all or part of the debt of temporal punishment due to forgiven sin, it is through the merits of Jesus Christ, and by virtue of the power which He committed to her: "All power is given to Me in heaven and on earth, and as the Father hath sent Me [with all power], so do I send you"; "To thee do I give the keys of the kingdom of heaven"; "Whatsoever you shall loose on earth shall be loosed also in heaven." If God has given to the Church power to forgive sin, we can hardly wonder if she claims the lesser power, as included in the greater, the power of remitting the penalty of sin—in other words, the power to grant indulgences upon condition of certain good works being performed.

(2) In the early ages of the Church, when the "zeal of God's house consumed them," knowing the need of penance and satisfaction for sin, the Church oftentimes, in the person

[1] Gen. iii.

of her ministers, gave external and public penance for external and public sins. These penances were given sometimes for life, sometimes for a stated term of years, sometimes for a fixed number of days. The number of days or years over which the penance extended depended generally upon the gravity of the sin, or the greatness of the scandal given. Sometimes it was, as we have said, given for the entire life of the penitent, sometimes for forty days, at other times for three, seven or ten years. The penitent undergoing this expiatory penance had to fast, and abstain, and refrain from amusements, and to spend his time in prayer and good works. Now we come to our object lesson in the meaning of indulgences in those days. An indulgence, in the language of the Church, was the equivalent to an amnesty in the language of men. As St Basil says: "He who has the power of binding and loosening can lessen the time of penance to the truly contrite." At particular times, therefore, as, for instance, when a persecution was imminent, or when a Christian under penance showed extraordinary sign of sorrow, or when he was in danger of death, or at the prayer of a martyr in prison, or on the occasion of an episcopal visitation, the Church would relax these penances: that was an indulgence. If a life penance was remitted, it was a plenary indulgence; if less than that, it was a partial indulgence of forty days, three, seven or ten years, as the case might be. An indulgence was then, as it is now, often granted conditionally upon some good work or works being performed—fasting, prayer, pilgrimage or almsdeeds. Spiritual favours were not as "pearls thrown before swine": they were offered to the contrite, who had to prove their sorrow by their willingness to do some service for God or their fellow-men in return.

Now that the discipline of public penances no longer prevails in the Church system, an indulgence would mean the remission of the whole or part of the temporal penalty due to forgiven sin as seen by God, though invisible to

men. Applied to the souls in purgatory an indulgence is granted by way of suffrage. The Church cannot enter purgatory, and free the captive souls from the prison-house of the great King; she has no real and direct jurisdiction over purgatory; she is the Church militant on earth, and not the Church triumphant in heaven, or even suffering in purgatory. But this she can do, and this she does, she can entreat of God by virtue of the merits of the divine Blood-shedding, and of the virtues of her saints, to remit a portion, or the whole, of the pains of the suffering dead, and applying to them the divine merits and the good works of her saints, to deliver them from their house of bondage, and bid them enter into the promised land. St Thomas makes a clear distinction between an indulgence granted to the living and an indulgence applied to the dead. In the one case the living man performs a good work which is prescribed, such as visiting a shrine; when he has done that work in a proper spirit, with a contrite heart, and in dispositions that are good, he gains the promised indulgence. A soul in purgatory, on the other hand, cannot do that good work, it can no longer merit, its time of sowing and reaping is at an end; but the Church on earth merits for that soul, offers to God the merits of her holy children, and asks the Most High to apply them to the soul or souls for whom she pleads. "A prelate cannot by his own will deliver souls from purgatory," he cannot absolve a soul from the *punishment* even of sin when it has left the bodily prison, but he can ask God to do so in the Church's name, and to apply to them what the saint calls "the common merits upon which indulgences rest."[1]

(3) By the "common merits" the angelic doctor understands what we have called the "Treasury of the Church," or what may be termed, in twentieth-century words, "the

[1] *Suppl.* 3ª pars, qu. lxxi, 10.

Church's spiritual bank." In another place[1] the same learned doctor explains the meaning of this expression. There is a mystical unity in the Church, which is "the body of Christ." One member helps another, as the hand helps the foot, and the foot the head; one can satisfy for the other; the merits of one can be applied to the other. Some holy ones of God more than satisfy the debt of temporal punishment which they owe to the eternal Father; some suffer with patience troubles and trials which they do not deserve; others perform works of supererogation which God's justice does not demand of them; then there are the superabundant merits of Jesus Christ our Lord. All these "satisfactions," these merits, these uncalled-for penances are not lost, nor are they useless and in vain. They form a spiritual treasure-house, a "bank" we have called it, upon which the Church can draw for the benefit of her needy children; for "These treasures," the saint adds, "are the common property of the Church, and as they belong to the multitude [of the faithful], they are distributed to individuals amongst them according to individual need." St Paul added his quota to this accumulation of spiritual treasures, to be drawn upon by the Church for her children in their hour of need: "I Paul . . . . now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up those things that are wanting of the sufferings of Christ in my flesh, *for His Body, which is the Church.*"[2] Saints without number have contributed spiritual gifts, innocent children who have suffered though they have never known sin, stainless virgins who have carried their baptismal robe unsullied before the judgement seat of Jesus Christ, martyrs who have undergone torments beyond the power of words to describe, confessors who have kept themselves "unspotted from this world," and yet have spent their life in labour and penitential toil. All these merits, virtues, good works, which they required not for

[1] *Suppl.*, 3ª pars, qu. xxv, art. 1. [2] Col. i, 24.

themselves, are in the power of the universal mother, who applies them to her children in need—to those on earth, giving them by virtue of the power of the keys, to those in need in the unseen world, applying them by means of suffrage or prayer, begging of the almighty Father to hear her prayer by virtue of the merits and prayers of her children, whether living or dead. In granting indulgences the Church on earth gives to her weak children some of the superabundant merits of her stronger ones, to her poor the superabundance of the spiritually wealthy, from this storehouse in the keeping of the eternal Father in heaven.

4. The necessity of making satisfaction for sin, the need we are under of doing penance even for sin that has been pardoned, and the fact that we incur a debt of temporal punishment for our wrong-doings was clearly the teaching of the early Church even in the earliest times. That we share with each other in mutual merits by virtue of the communion of saints, is another doctrine which forms an article of the earliest Creed. That these temporal punishments may be cancelled by legitimate authority, either in part or in their entirety, was a point upon which the Christian writers in the years of the Church's infancy laid particular stress. In his "Development of Christian Doctrine"[1] Cardinal Newman quotes from several of the early saints to prove this. "If the sinner spare not himself, he will be spared by God"; "Let him lie in sackcloth, and by the austerity of his life make amends for his past pleasures"; "As we have sinned greatly, let us weep greatly . . . . the repentance must not fall short of the offence"; "Take heed to thyself that, in proportion to the fault, thou admit restoration from the remedy"; "The necessity of the purifying discipline is such that, if it does not take place in this life, it must after death, and is then to be effected by fire, not by a destructive, but a dis-

[1] Part II, chap. xii, sect. 3, 4. "Satisfactions and Purgatory."

criminating fire, fire pervading the soul which passes through it." These are words attributed respectively to St Ambrose, St Jerome, St Cyprian, St Basil and St Clement of Alexandria. Tertullian wrote a special treatise on the subject,[1] exhorting the faithful to do penance for sin as a means of escaping hell fire, and instancing Nabuchadonosor, king of Babylon, who "offered to the Lord the sacrifice of repentance, fulfilling the work of confession in the filthiness of seven years, with his nails growing wild after the manner of an eagle's, and his unkempt hair wearing the roughness of the lion. O horrid treatment! Him at whom men shuddered God received." St Cyprian writes:[2] "In full council assembled we determined, not only by our common consent, but with terrors added, that the brethren should do penance, and that no one should hastily grant peace to those who did not penance;" and he inveighs in strong language against those who take pains "that sins be not expiated by due satisfaction, that wounds be not washed clean by tears." St Pacian wrote "the Paræsis," or an exhortation to penance, which is full of beautiful and suggestive thoughts, all bearing upon the necessity of satisfaction for sin committed and forgiven, now or hereafter, unless the satisfaction be remitted. He speaks of "those who, having duly confessed and laid bare their crimes, either know not of, or refuse, the remedies of penance and the very acts belonging to the ministry of confession." He says: "What will be the punishment of those who either do no penance or neglect it, and who die, therefore, in their wound and imposthumes? And what again will be their crown, what their reward, who purge the stains of their conscience by right and regular confession?" He upbraids "those who, having committed crimes, refuse penance"; who "are timid after being shameless, modest after sinning; who blush not to sin,

[1] *De Pœnitentia*, xii. [2] Ep. lix.

yet blush to confess . . . . who come to the hands of the priest, who come in the sight of angels, with the confidence of innocence; who insult the divine patience." "Rejoice, O sinner," he exclaims, "if in this life thou art cut off by death, or wasted by sickness, that thou be not punished in the life to come." "What then shall I, the priest, do now who am compelled to cure?" he asks. "If there is any one of you who can bear to be cut and cauterized, I still can do it. Behold the knife of the prophet: 'Turn unto the Lord your God with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning; and rend your heart.' Fear not this cutting, most beloved. David bore it. . . . He who had once been accustomed to gems and to purple hid his soul in fasting; he whom seas, whom woods, whom streams served . . . . wasted in floods of tears those eyes with which he had beheld the glory of God. . . . The King of Babylon performed penance, forsaken of all. . . . Behold the cutting which I promised! Whoso shall be able to endure it shall be healed. I will yet apply fire from the cautery of the apostle. Let us see whether you can bear it. 'I have judged,' he says, 'when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, to deliver such an one unto Satan, for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.'[1] Where is the destruction of your flesh? What say ye, penitents?"

One of the most pernicious of the many heresies broached in the sixteenth century, whether in England, Germany or Switzerland, was that of the denial of the necessity of penance and personal satisfaction for sin. The plea that Christ suffered for all, and that, therefore, we need not suffer, was only the expression of a self-indulgence, a sensual licence which rebelled against the words of Jesus Christ: "Do penance, or you shall all likewise perish,"[2] and

[1] 1 Cor. v, 3-5. [2] Luke xiii, 5.

the other words of the Master: "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me."[1] From Genesis to Apocalypse, from apostolic writers to the spiritual writers of our own time, there is one continuous and continued clear and unequivocal call to penance running through the whole of the Church's teaching. Either do penance or die. Deny yourself if you would live. Make up what is wanting on your part to the sufferings of Christ, if you would have part in Christ's redemption. This is the teaching of the Catholic Church from the first century to the twentieth. If in this world we omit penance, it will await us in the world beyond the grave. There is only one other hope—a spiritual amnesty, a free pardon, a remission of the debt. This the Church can grant to those who are duly prepared to receive it, by virtue of the promise of Christ, the power of the keys, the virtues of her sainted children, and above all and in all, through the supereminent and superabundant merits of Jesus Christ. "We believe," in the words of St Cyprian, "that the merits of the martyrs can do much with the just Judge." We believe that out of their superabundance our deficiency and the deficiencies of others may be supplied, that they may help us here and in purgatory, now and hereafter. We believe that the Church has ever held this as part of her Creed, and that, as she remitted the canonical penances in favour of our brethren in the early days, she can remit their equivalent to us, who are her children now. We believe that as St Paul decreed punishment upon the incestuous Corinthian "for the destruction of his flesh, that the spirit might be saved in the day of the Lord,"[2] and then, afterwards, lest he should be "swallowed up by over much sorrow," forgave him "in the person of Christ,"[3] so can the Church do for us. In a word, we believe in the power of indulgences to remit, not guilt, not sin, not eternal

[1] Matt. xvi, 24. [2] 1 Cor. v, 5. [3] 2 Cor. ii, 10.

pain, but temporal punishment, which we know is due even to forgiven sin.

The doctrine of indulgences gives us a high and exalted idea of God, His justice and His mercy; and far from being, as some would have it, an incentive to sin, it is on the contrary, a deterrent influence, showing to us the gravity of sin, to which punishment is attached, even when the malice has been pardoned.

If at any time the power of indulgences has been abused, no one repudiates and condemns that abuse more than the Church herself. The sins of a child or of children, must not be imputed to the mother, unless the sins are committed at the suggestion, the instigation, or with the connivance of the mother. If she warns her children, and tries to withhold them from sin; if she threatens them with penalties if they give way to the sin; if she anathematizes the sin when committed, and exhorts the sinning one to repentance and amendment, surely she is guiltless of the sin. So has it ever been with the Catholic Church. She teaches that it would be simony to sell or traffic in holy things. Nothing sacred may be sold for money. Simon Magus was taught this lesson by a bitter and painful experience. Yet, alas, since Christ was sold for silver, men have been found selling Christian gifts for gold. A glance at the English newspapers will show the systematic trading that is carried on in church livings, and advowsons, or presentations to vacant benefices in the English Church. If anything of the kind has ever been in the Catholic Church, it has been done against the knowledge, or at least the will of the Church. She has protested against it, and has removed the scandal, whenever it has been in her power to do so. But the just and proper use of indulgences she has ever upheld, and she still upholds as a legacy of Christ our Lord to His earthly and suffering children.

CHAPTER XXVIII

CATHOLIC DEVOTIONS

THE Catholic Church sanctions for the use of her children certain forms of devotion or religious practices, some of which are at times misunderstood, or at least not understood by those who do not profess her Creed. It may be of profit to those who are seriously in earnest in their desire to learn the meaning of Catholic practices, as well as the meaning of the articles of Catholic belief, if we briefly refer to some of the most prominent of Catholic devotions. All such devotions, or religious exercises, are intended, primarily and essentially, to lead souls to God, to remind them of God, and to help them to love Him. None are of obligation, except the highest of all, which is more than a devotion: it is the Christian sacrifice, the only sacrifice of the new law, the holy Mass of which we have already treated. If these devotions are multiplied in the Church, it is only to enable every Catholic to find one at least suited to his circumstances, his disposition and his peculiar attraction, and calculated to be helpful to him on his way to God. As we have said, the highest form of devotion, the one devotion of the Church which is of obligation, is the *holy Mass*, at which all Catholics are bound to assist on Sundays at least, and on days which are "of obligation," unless they are legitimately prevented.

After the Mass, the service of the *Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament* is undoubtedly the most solemn and the most awe-inspiring. It is not a devotion of ancient date, indeed it is of comparatively modern institution; it is of a more recent introduction even than the *Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament* with its accompanying procession, of which there is no actual

record of earlier date than the beginning of the fourteenth century. Now, however, "Benediction" is one of the most common and popular devotions of the Church. It generally, indeed almost universally, forms part of the Sunday afternoon or evening service in every church, besides being repeated on other days in large towns and even in Catholic village churches once, if not oftener, each week. This popular and devotional service is beautifully described by Cardinal Newman in one of his "Lectures on the Present Position of Catholics in England": "The Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament is one of the simplest rites of the Church. The priests enter, and kneel down; one of them unlocks the tabernacle, takes out the Blessed Sacrament, inserts it in a monstrance of precious metal, and sets it in a conspicuous place above the altar, in the midst of lights, for all to see. The people then begin to sing; meanwhile the priest twice offers incense to the King of heaven before whom he is kneeling. Then he takes the monstrance in his hands, and turning to the people, blesses them with the Most Holy, in the form of a cross, while the bell is sounded by one of the attendants to call attention to the ceremony. It is our Lord's solemn benediction of His people, as when He lifted up His hands over the children, or when He blessed His chosen ones as He ascended up from Mount Olivet. As sons might come before a parent before going to bed at night, so, once or twice a week, the great Catholic family comes before the eternal Father, after the bustle and toil of the day, and He smiles upon them, and sheds upon them the light of His countenance. It is a full accomplishment of what the priest invoked upon the Israelites: 'The Lord bless thee, and keep thee; the Lord show His face to thee, and have mercy on thee; the Lord turn His countenance to thee, and give thee peace.' Can there be a more touching rite, even in the judgement of those who do not believe in it? How many a man, not a Catholic, is moved on seeing it, to say, Oh, that I did but

believe it!' when he sees the priest take up the Fount of mercy, and the people bend low in adoration. It is one of the most beautiful, natural and soothing actions of the Church."[1]

The Quarant' Ore, or Forty Hours, is another form of devotion to the Blessed Sacrament. We may call it a prolonged exposition of the Blessed Sacrament. Exposition means that the Most Holy is taken from the tabernacle and, as at Benediction, is lifted up on the altar throne, only for a longer period of time, surrounded by candles and flowers that the faithful may come and silently pray before their Saviour, "lifted up" to draw all hearts to Himself. Sometimes the exposition continues during a day, but as the words imply, during the *Quarant' Ore* the Blessed Sacrament is "exposed" for forty continuous hours in honour of the time our Lord spent in the tomb. In Rome, and in other Catholic cities, the Most Holy is exposed without intermission throughout the year, each church being responsible for forty hours in succession, and thus filling up the cycle of the year. In England, in many dioceses at least, the various churches have the devotion of the forty hours in Lent, and thus keep up perpetual adoration in one church or another during the holy season. At other times *private visits* are made to our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament, and Catholics are encouraged to repeat such visits as often as they may, for the Blessed Sacrament is always "reserved" in the tabernacle on the Catholic altar, and the little lamp ever burning in the sanctuary is to the Catholic what the star was to the wise men, a messenger from God calling him to adore the King of Kings.

After the holy Mass and devotion to the Blessed Sacrament, *the Divine Office* is generally reckoned as the most sacred of the Church's prayers. It consists of seven divisions, or seven canonical "hours" as they are called, these being known by the names of the time

[1] Lecture VI.

or hour at which they were formerly said or sung: *matins* with *lauds*, *prime*, *terce*, *sext*, *none*, *vespers* and *compline*. Each of these hours is made up of scriptural and liturgical "prayer and praise." The psalms form the largest portion of the office, and to these are added selections from the Old Testament and the New, bearing upon the feast that is celebrated, passages from the inspired Gospels and the apostolic Epistles, appropriate extracts from the writings of the early Christian doctors, and prayers suitable to the time of the year or the event in honour of which solemn feast is kept by the Church. David testifies that he rose in the middle of the night to pray, and that he prayed seven times each day: "I arose in the middle of the night to confess to Thy name, O Lord;"[1] "Seven times each day I sang praise to Thee."[2] In the Acts of the Apostles the "hours" of prayer are referred to, "at the ninth hour of prayer," "at the third hour," etc. Though the breviary, or office book, did not exist in its present form in the early days of the Church, the early Christians had a system of regular prayer corresponding to the breviary hours. During the middle and earlier centuries it was a pious custom, though not of obligation, for the laity to assist at the canonical hours, that being the Church's liturgical prayer. St Jerome, it is said, at the request of Pope St Damasus, arranged psalms and lections, or lessons, for the different hours, and hymns were added as early as the sixth century. It is now of obligation for priests, deacons, sub-deacons and members of certain religious orders to say the divine office daily, unless they are legitimately exempted or lawfully dispensed.

A form of devotion which is in much favour with Catholics is that called *the Stations of the Cross*. Representations are to be found in Catholic churches, and in Catholic lands by the public waysides, of the fourteen chief sorrowful events in the passion of our Lord, culminating in His death and burial. To prevent the mind from wandering, the

[1] Ps. cxviii, 62. [2] Ibid. 164.

devout worshipper kneels before each of these in turn and meditates upon the scene depicted, at the same time saying certain prayers and making acts of sorrow for sin as an atonement for the indignities to which the Saviour of the world was exposed. This devotion is called sometimes the *via crucis*, or way of the cross, because it leads the pious soul along that blood-stained way, beginning with Pilate's judgement seat and ending on Calvary, "the place of the skulls," and the tomb in which our Lord was laid.

The *Rosary*, so much and so often and so inconsistently reviled by Protestants, is a devotion which is deservedly popular amongst Catholics. In England for the past three centuries it has been the shibboleth of the Catholic Church. It is traditionally believed to have been revealed by the Blessed Virgin to St Dominic nearly seven hundred years ago. The practice of using beads for counting prayers existed long before that date. As the present writer has written elsewhere: "St Paul the Abbot of Lydia, who lived in the fifth century, repeated the *Pater* a hundred times each day, and made use of little stones with which to count them. St Benedict had 'round balls fastened together by a thread' for the same purpose. St Gertrude died in 1263, and her bead-string, consisting of little balls strung together by thin twine, was buried with her. In England also the practice prevailed. In 1040 Countess Godiva of Coventry had 'a chain of pearls and precious stones whereon she was accustomed to count her prayers.' An English council in the ninth century directed that 'seven belts of *Pater nosters*' should be said for a person deceased. Paternoster Row, in London, is supposed to take its name from the fact that beads for counting *Paters* were sold there. So that in using beads St Dominic took up and propagated a pious custom which he found but did not initiate.

"The Rosary, as every Catholic knows, is a form of supplication which unites in itself mental and vocal

prayer. It consists of fifteen meditations on the principal events of our Lord's life and the life of His holy mother. The fifteen meditations are divided into three equal parts. The first part brings before the mind the chief mysteries which gave joy to the world, viz., the annunciation, the visitation, the birth of our Lord, His being offered in the temple as a Child, and His being found there as a Boy of twelve: these are called the *Joyful Mysteries.* The second part of the Rosary is called the *Sorrowful Mysteries* or decades, because it introduces to our pious notice the sorrows of our Lord's life, which culminated in His sacred and saving death: the agony and prayer in the garden, His being scourged at the pillar, His thorn-crowning, His carrying the cross from the place of judgement to Calvary, and finally His death upon the cross for the redemption of men. In the third division of the Rosary we are led to the contemplation of His triumph, and hence it is called by the name of the *Glorious Mysteries;* these mysteries comprise His glorious resurrection from the dead, His triumphant ascension from earth to heaven, the coming down of the Holy Spirit upon the infant Church on Pentecost Day, the assumption of our Lady into the kingdom of her Son, and then her solemn coronation as Queen of earth and Queen of heaven.

"The Rosary has been called 'an epitome of the gospel,' recalling to us as it does the incarnation of Jesus Christ, the consoling doctrine of the redemption by the sacred blood-shedding, and the hopeful and helpful teaching of the future rewards. 'This is life eternal, to know Thee, the one true and living God, and Him whom Thou hast sent, Jesus Christ.'[1] St Paul gives us a commentary upon these words of the divine Master: 'For he that cometh to God must believe that He is and is a rewarder of them that seek Him.'[2] The mysteries of the Rosary re-

[1] John xvii, 3. [2] Heb. xi, 6.

mind us that He is, that He is our saviour and our redeemer, and that He is our rewarder, that He came into the world 'for us men and for our salvation,' that He left the world because 'it was expedient for us that He should go,' and that He has gone 'to prepare a place' for us, so that His word may be realized: 'Where I am, there shall My minister be.'[1] This is the doctrinal part of the Rosary; these are the subjects proposed for our meditation, thus supplying spiritual food for the mind, lifting up the intellect to God, keeping alive and strengthening the theological virtues of faith, hope and love.

"The Rosary mysteries, like fifteen faithful mirrors, reflect back to us the ways and life, the words and actions, the joys, the sorrows and the triumphs of our Lord. As fifteen life-like pictures, they reveal to us, as in a cinematograph, the scenes and incidents of which the Gospel is the faithful record, and the historic personages who took part in them. We see Mary and Joseph and Elizabeth, and the two Johns, and Anna, and Simeon, and the doctors of the law, Pilate and Herod, the Jews and the Roman soldiers and the centurion, the apostles, and the angels on earth and in heaven; but above them all—like Saul, 'head and shoulders above the prophets'—we see Jesus, the central figure around which all revolve, the Sun which illumines all, the Sheaf before which all fall down in lowly adoring love. As an eloquent preacher, eloquent beyond the power of words, the Rosary preaches to us 'the Way, the Truth and the Life.' As a most convincing teacher it impresses upon us, in a manner which we cannot gainsay, 'the wonderful ways of God.'

"Such is the devotion as a mental prayer or meditation, consecrating the mind at once and the heart. But the lips had to be dedicated to God as well as the intellect and the will; and hence, as Leo XIII expresses it,

[1] John xii, 26.

St Dominic 'combined, and as it were interlaced the subjects to be meditated with the angelical salutation and with the prayer to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.'[1] Whilst we meditate upon the sublime truths, and while our hearts are made to 'leap up to God,' to use St Augustine's expressive word, 'and in our meditation a fire—the fire of divine love—breaks out,'[2] we unite the voice to the mind and heart, vocal prayer to mental prayer, saying, as we think of each mystery, one 'Our Father,' ten 'Hail Marys' and one 'Glory be to the Father,' thus fulfilling our Lord's injunction: 'When you pray, pray thus: Our Father,' etc.[3]—thus again re-echoing the angel's word to Mary: 'Hail full of grace,' etc.;[4] thus once more vieing with the angels in holy rivalry, and singing with them honour and praise and glory to the Blessed Three, Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

"And lest our minds should wander from our subject lest we should be distracted by the counting of the prescribed prayers, we hold the bead-string in our hands and pass a bead through our fingers for each *Pater*, *Ave* and *Gloria* that we say, so that we may know when our holy task is done. We sanctify the mind by sacred thoughts, the heart by acts of sorrow and love, the lips by the inspired words of sacred prayer, and the fingers by contact with the blessed beads."[5]

So that the Rosary, like all Catholic devotions, leads us to Jesus Christ, the Son of the all-holy God.

There are many other devotions in the Catholic Church which are found to be of spiritual assistance to the majority of her children. There are *Third Orders*—especially those of St Francis and St Dominic—which are intended for people living in the world and leading an

[1] *Encyclical Letter on the Rosary, September*, 1883.
[2] Ps. xxxviii, 4. [3] Matt. vi, 9. [4] Luke i, 28.
[5] *The Rosary Confraternity*, published by the Catholic Truth Society.

ordinary work-a-day existence, yet who aspire to something which will bring them nearer to God than the ordinary Christian life; and so they are banded together into societies under certain rules of fasting and abstinence and special private, and sometimes even public, prayers. The sodality again of *The Children of Mary*, intended specially for young girls, who meet together, and pray together, and say special private prayers, that by the mutual help of example and supplication they may aim at imitating, at however humble a distance, the virtues of Mary, the mother of Jesus, under whose patronage they are enrolled. *The Holy Family* is a society of men or women who go to communion regularly and in a body on certain days, and meet together at stated times in the church to spur each other on in the ways of God. *The Guild of Ransom* consists of many thousands of members in England and in other lands, who offer up daily prayers for the return of England to the faith once delivered to the saints. *The League of the Cross* and other temperance societies are organizations which have for their zealous object the suppression of drunkenness, the increase of temperance, and the good of the souls of their members, as well as the salvation of their fellow-men.

Finally, the *wearing of scapulars* is a practice which, though in no way of obligation amongst Catholics, nevertheless largely prevails. Scapulars are so called because they consist of two pieces of cloth which are worn over the *scapulæ*, or shoulders, as a badge, or symbol, or profession of faith and love. Freemasons, Oddfellows, members of the Primrose League and other social, political or philanthropical societies wear badges of various kinds as signs of membership and reminders of certain obligations, duties or privileges which are theirs. So is it in the Catholic Church; only the members of the various confraternities do not always wear their badges "that they may be seen by men." They do not attach any intrinsic value to the bits of metal

that make the medal, or the pieces of cloth that form the scapular; they value them as symbols and signs. Their's is devotion and not superstition. Their object in wearing them is that these pious objects may remind them to lift up their hearts to God. They are as monitors saying to them: "Sursum corda—lift up your hearts," and perpetually calling for the refrain, "Habemus ad Dominum—we have lifted them up to the Lord." Some scapulars are worn in honour of the passion of our Lord, their colour is *red*, a reminder of the precious Blood, and the prayers said by the wearers have reference to our Saviour's blood-shedding. Another scapular is *brown*, or the scapular of Mount Carmel, and, like the Rosary, the trend of the accompanying devotions is to lead us "per Mariam ad Jesum," through the mother to her divine Son. The *black* scapular, or the scapular of the Seven Dolours, is a sign that they who wear it think, or ought to think, often of Mary's sorrows and, consequently, of the sorrows of the divine Son, the cause of the mother's grief. There is a scapular too of the *Blessed Trinity*, which is intended to inspire devotion to the triune Godhead, Father, Son and Holy Ghost. All these, and all other devotions which are found in the Catholic Church, are ordained and intended to promote in Catholics an increase—a daily increase—in faith, hope and love. They appeal to the senses, and through the senses to the intellect and will, that they may thus lift up the mind and heart "to the mountains from whence help shall come to me."[1] The language of all Catholic devotions, whatever form they may take, whether they be directed immediately to God or through the mediation of the saints, is the language of the royal psalm-singer: "To Thee have I lifted up mine eyes who dwellest in the heavens. Behold, as the eyes of servants are upon the hands of their masters; as the eyes of the handmaid are upon the hands of her mistress; so are our eyes unto the Lord our God, until He have mercy upon us."[2]

[1] Ps. cxx, 1. [2] Ps. cxxii, 1, 2.

CHAPTER XXIX

"I BELIEVE IN THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY AND THE LIFE EVERLASTING." AMEN.

THIS twelfth, and last, article of the Apostles' Creed is the consummation of all the rest, it is the goal to which all the others lead and tend. Our faith in God, in the incarnation of His divine Son, in the work of redemption, in the Church which He founded, in the sacraments which are the seven channels of His grace and love to men, in the life of the Holy Ghost in the world, in the place of purification—all are ordained to life, eternal life. Our faith, our religious practices, our devotions, all have as their crown, life everlasting. We believe, we trust, we love, we breathe the spirit of the theological virtues into our practical daily lives, and thus render them fruitful in good works, because we believe in, and hope for, the "world without end." Our belief in the communion of saints is not enough for us, it does not satisfy our aspirations; we hope for, and we long for, actual and eternal communication with the saints, life with them in the Father's home. We must be with them, we must live with them this eternal life. That we can commune with them in spirit now, that we can pray to them, that they can speak for us and pray for us, perhaps even visit us, is something; but it is not sufficient. It consoles us now, but only for a time: it will not be enough for always. There is comfort, and there may be truth, in the departing child's words to its mother:

> If I can I'll come again, mother, from out my resting place;
> Though you'll not see me, mother, I shall look upon your face;
> Though I cannot speak a word, I shall hearken what you say,
> And be often, often with you, when you think I'm far away.

But the mother wants more than that: she would be with her child, and with both her child's and her own Father, in the "resting place" in the far away home. "Presence is an invincible demand of love." The one who loves God, and loves God's sainted children, may be resigned for a time to listen, to speak, to wait, to long, but eventually the demand of love asserts itself—both God's love and man's love—and he who loves God must "see Him as He is, face to face." Faith must give place to vision, hope must be realized in its fulfilment, charity must conquer time and space, and the faithful loving soul must be with God. The "mirror" will only satisfy for a time, we must "know as we are known"; the "dark manner" must give place to light, the "light of God's countenance," and in that light we must "see light."

2. As we are, in this mortal, passible, corruptible body, we cannot "see God and live": hence must "this mortality put on immortality, this corruption must put on incorruption." The future resurrection of the body, which is to be eternally wedded to the soul, has always been the object of the faith and confidence of the children of God. Job's words, spoken in the hour of deep sorrow, are expressive of this confiding faith and loving confidence: "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and in the last day I shall rise out of the earth. And I shall be clothed again with my skin, and in my flesh I shall see my God. Whom I myself shall see, and my eyes behold, and not another. This my hope is laid up in my bosom."[1] Isaias foretold this for the consolation of God's suffering people: "Thy dead men shall live, my slain shall rise again; awake and give praise, ye that dwell in the dust: for thy dew is the dew of the light, and the land of the giants thou shalt pull down into ruin. . . . . For behold the Lord will come out of His place, to visit the iniquity of the inhabitants of the earth against

[1] Job xix, 25-27.

Him, and the earth shall disclose her blood, and shall cover her slain no more."[1] There are words in the book of Daniel which contradict the theory of some who assert that, though the Jews believed in the resurrection of the just, there is nothing to prove in the Old Testament that it was part of their creed that the wicked would live for ever: "And many of those that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake; some unto life everlasting, and others unto reproach to see it always. But they . . . . that instruct many unto justice shall shine as stars for all eternity. But go thou thy way till the time appointed; and thou shall rest, and stand in thy lot unto the end of days."[2] Our divine Lord Himself testifies to the faith of the Jewish Church in the resurrection: "But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have you not read that which was spoken by God saying: 'I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. For He is not the God of the dead but of the living: for all live to Him.'"[3] These words were addressed to "the Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection." Martha again bore witness to the faith in the resurrection. Jesus said to her: "Thy brother shall rise again." And Martha replied: "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day."[4] We have another witness in St Paul: "By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered Isaac . . . . to whom it was said: In Isaac shall thy seed be called. Accounting that God is able to raise up even from the dead." In our Lord's time, and in apostolic days, and even, as we learn from St Pacian, for some centuries after, the heresy of the Sadducees, to which we have alluded, prevailed, and it was against this denial of the resurrection that St Paul, and after him several early doctors of the Church, defended the doctrine so strenuously. The hope of the resurrection was

[1] Isa. xxvi, 19-21. [2] Dan. xii, 2, 3, 13. [3] Matt. xxii, 31, 32. [4] John xi, 24.

their comfort in sorrow, their stay in trials and afflictions, their encouragement in martyrdom: "If we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, in like manner shall we be of His resurrection";[1] "If I fought with beasts at Ephesus, what doth it profit me if the dead rise not again?"[2] That the dead do rise again, for the Christian there can be no shadow of doubt. The words of Jesus Christ admit of no other construction, of no second interpretation. "The hour cometh wherein all that are in the graves, shall hear the voice of the Son of God . . . . And they that have done good things shall come forth unto the resurrection of life: and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of the judgement."[3] The faith of the apostles is beyond dispute: "We will not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning them that are asleep, that ye be not sorrowful, even as others who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them who have slept through Jesus, God will bring with Him."[4] And when the Sadducees argued against the faith in the resurrection, St Paul never wearied in vindicating the doctrine: "But some man will say: 'How do the dead rise again?' Or with what manner of body shall they come? Senseless man, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die first. And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not the body that shall be, but bare grain, as of wheat, or of some of the rest. But God giveth it a body as He will, and to every seed its proper body." From this, as the apostle argues, we see God's work in the resurrection. "It is sown in corruption, it shall rise in incorruption. It is sown in dishonour, it shall rise in glory. It is sown in weakness, it shall rise in power. It is sown a natural body, it shall rise a spiritual body."[5]

3. This resurrection, like the resurrection of Jesus

[1] Heb. xi, 17-19. [2] 1 Cor. xv, 32. [3] John v, 28, 29.
[4] 1 Thess. iv, 12. [5] 1 Cor. xv, 35-44.

Christ, is a resurrection to eternal life. "Christ rising from the dead, dieth now no more; death shall no longer have dominion over him."[1] As of Christ, so of the Christian, "I believe in the resurrection of the body and life everlasting, amen." These two go together, they are inseparably united in the mind of man and in the will of God. The risen life is to be an eternal life, either of happiness or woe, an endless life, a life co-existent with eternity. The immortality of the soul, the soul's undying life, rests upon two arguments, the one intrinsic, the other extrinsic. The intrinsic, or *a priori* proof, is deduced from the very nature of the soul itself; the *a posteriori* or extrinsic evidence of the eternal life of the soul, comes to us in the revelation of God, and the teaching of His Church.

The soul cannot die. Its very existence is the guarantee of its immortality. It is created by God, and once created by Him it rises above all sublunary elements and accidents. It is independent of the ordinary laws of material existences. It is a spirit, and being a spirit it is, consequently, immaterial and cannot corrupt or die. It lacks the elements or principles of corruption. It has no materiality. Death means dissolution, and in the soul there are no parts to be dissolved. It is not, like the body, formed of heterogeneous particles; it is not made up of grains of dust or atoms of clay; there can be no division, no rending, no dissolving, and, therefore, no death. A spiritual substance, such as is the soul, is not influenced by time, by age, by decay; it soars above all these, and has fixed laws of its own, one of which is the essential law of immortality. A human soul can no more die than can an angel, a cherub, or a seraph. It is its very nature to live. Life is essential to its being—once living always living. The only way in which the soul could cease to exist would be by annihilation, and annihilation could only come from

[1] Rom. vi, 9.

God. He only who created it could destroy it. He alone who made it to be could make it not to be. But this is not God's economy. He destroys nothing which He has once made, not a bird, not a feather, not a worm, not a leaf, not a blade of grass. He changes, He transforms, He transubstantiates sometimes, He lifts up something to another and higher sphere, or He reduces it to a lower grade of being—He destroys never. Water passing through the vine becomes wine, but the water is not destroyed. The autumn leaves corrupt, and go to feed and enrich the earth, they are not reduced to nothingness. The food we take becomes flesh and blood and sinew and bone, it is not annihilated. And if God is so solicitous about the lilies of the field, about the sparrows, two of which are sold for a farthing, and about the grass which to-morrow is cast into the oven, "how much more you, O ye of little faith!" How much more for the soul, for which all things were made, as the soul was created for God! "Now this is the will of My Father who sent Me, that of all that He hath given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day."[1]

4. Even pagans and unbelievers—many at least—upon whom the light of revelation had never shone, looked forward to another life when this life should have passed away. The doctrine of metempsychosis, or the passing of the spirit from one body into another at the death of the first, in other words the transmigration of souls, so prevalent amongst the pagans of the olden days, and still forming the faith of many of the savage tribes now existing in the world, was, and is, a profession of faith in the immortality of the soul. The body dies, it asserts, but not the soul; the soul lives on, passing from body to body, never dying, always living in this or in another sphere. The Christian belief and the belief of God's children in pre-Christian times is, and was from the beginning, this: that when the body is

[1] John vi, 30.

dissolved the soul passes away—not into another body, but into God's keeping. "The souls of the just are in the hand of God, and the torment of wickedness shall not touch them. To the eyes of the unwise they seemed to die; but they are in peace, and, though in the sight of men they suffered torments, their hope is full of immortality."[1] "Man shall go into the house of eternity," says Ecclesiastes. But how? "The dust shall return to its earth, and the spirit to the God who gave it."[2]

These souls "in the hand of God," these *animæ separatæ*, as St Thomas calls them, i.e., souls separated from the body, or disembodied souls, await in heaven, in hell, or in purgatory, the appointed day of judgement. Then are they reunited to the bodies which were formerly their homes. Nothing could be more graphic than the description of St Paul: nothing could give us a more vivid idea of the Christian faith in the resurrection of the body. "Behold I tell you a mystery. We shall all indeed rise again; but we shall not all be changed. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the last trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall rise again incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruption must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. And when this mortal shall put on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that ts written: Death is swallowed up in victory. O Death, where is thy victory? O Death, where is thy sting?"[3]

> The mighty trumpet's marvellous tone
> Shall pierce through each sepulchral stone,
> And summon all before the throne.

St John in his mysterious vision saw the answer to "the mighty trumpet's marvellous tone." "And the sea gave up the dead that were in it: and death and hell gave up their

[1] Wisd. iii, 1, 4. [2] Eccles. xii, 7. [3] 1 Cor. xv, 51-55.

dead that were in them: and they were judged every one according to his works."[1] "And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne."[2] The bodies of men, whether burnt in fire, or drowned in the sea, or buried in the earth, are all to be re-formed. He who from the stones could raise up children to Abraham will raise up His own children from the dust, the water and the fire. He who in the beginning from a handful of earth could make the body of the first man, will gather together again the dust into which men's bodies have crumbled, and remake them as of old "To God all things are possible." He forms and remoulds these bodies, and invests them with immortality. "It is sown in corruption, it shall rise in incorruption; it is sown in dishonour, it shall rise in honour; it is sown in weakness, it shall rise in power; it is sown an animal body, it shall rise a spiritual body."[3] And how, in God's providence, is this "mystery" effected? The immortal spirit rejoins the body and invests it with its immortality. There has been no divorce between body and soul, it has only been a separation. They were not divorced, but "separated" souls. During the years of separation they still belonged to each other, they were only waiting for the sounding of the trumpet and the voice of God, they were expecting the moment when by God's will they were to be reunited, and were to live their life together eternally in weal or in woe, in joy or in sorrow, in heaven or in hell. Our Lord Himself has settled this question once and for ever. We need no further decision of pope or council. If pope proclaims anew, or council again defines the eternity of the risen life, it is only a renewal of the definition of the supreme and divine Head of the Church: "And these shall go into everlasting punishment, but the just into everlasting life."[4] This word of divine

[1] Apoc. xx, 12. [2] Apoc. xx, 12.
[3] 1 Cor. xv, 42-44. [4] Matt. xxv, 46.

truth settles the question beyond cavil or dispute, or need of further dogmatic definition.

5. Eternal life corresponds to, and realizes an innate desire of man's immortal spirit, which yearns and longs to live for ever. This is no delusion; it is a real, genuine craving of every human soul. Every man has an inborn desire to live. He may be weary of life in this world, he may even in his weariness of life end it by suicide, but he hopes to live elsewhere. The savage is fearless of danger in war, and almost seems to court death. But why? He believes that his soul will pass into another body, and live a higher life. The child of God desires with St Paul "to be dissolved." But why again? That he may "be with Christ." God's word, as well as the divine instinct within him, assures to man another and a ceaseless life. He has tried to do God's will, and yet he has not prospered in this world; he has done many good actions for which he seems to have received no reward. "Sursum corda." He looks up, and he looks beyond; the prosperity and the reward await him in his renewed life in the world above and beyond the grave. The just man often suffers in this life, and the wicked man triumphs over the just; the psalmist speaks of "the prosperity of sinners;" but, patience! he knows, his instinct tells him, and God confirms the instinct, that "recompense" will be made to just and wicked alike, in the world which succeeds to earth's earthly life, the eternal world of the eternal God.

6. The wicked "shall go into everlasting punishment" is the divine, and consequently the infallible, definition of the eternity of hell, and not only of hell but of eternal punishment. In hell there is no redemption, for in hell there is no repentance, no sorrow for sin, no love of God. The "weeping and wailing" are not over sin, but over their torments, and these signs of sorrow really come from despair, the fruitless "gnashing of teeth." The minds and wills of the lost souls are, like the fallen angels, fixed, eternally

fixed, in their malice and in their hatred of God. This obstinacy in evil is, according to St Thomas,[1] one of the explanations of the eternity of hell. The lost themselves are unchanged, unchanging and unchangeable; and so, the malice remaining eternally, eternal exile and eternal punishment must ensue. The justice of God demands that the unrepenting should not be forgiven, and so the eternally unrepentant are eternally unforgiven, and eternally in their place of banishment and woe. St Cyril exhorts people to think of this, reminding them that "the devil so blinds them, that they think not of the eternal punishment of hell;"[2] on the contrary, he would that we should "have before our eyes the fear of God and the eternal punishment more than the fear of man and brief suffering,"[3] and that we should remember "the punishment of hunger and thirst eternal."[4] This is the ordinary language of the early writers of the Church, and it is only a repetition of the words of the divine Master. "The hell of unquenchable fire, where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not extinguished,"[5] "Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire which was prepared for the devil and his angels,"[6] are the words of Jesus Christ Himself. "They who obey not the Gospel shall suffer eternal punishment in destruction from the face of the Lord and for the glory of His power,"[7] "He will give fire and worms to their flesh that they may burn and feel for ever,"[8] "The smoke of their torments shall ascend up for ever and ever,"[9] are words which He has spoken through His inspired servants, and for the believer in holy scripture they put the question of the eternity of hell beyond doubt, and outside the region of polemics for ever.

Few believing Christians deny or profess to doubt the

[1] *Summa, Suppl.*, 3ª pars, xcviii, 1.
[2] Ep. lix, 25.
[3] Ep. viii, 2.
[4] Ep. ii, 2.
[5] Mark ix, 45.
[6] Matt. xxv, 41.
[7] 2 Thess. i, 9.
[8] Judith xvi, 21.
[9] Apoc xiv, 2.

eternity of heaven, yet, strange to say, the eternity of heaven rests upon the same basis as the eternity of hell, viz., on the immortality of the soul, the inflexibility of the human will when once the eternal choice is made, and the written word of God. To reject the one and to admit the other is the very acme of inconsistency. If God's word is literally true in the one case, why not in the other? The same text speaks of heaven and hell as being eternal, in the same breath the divine word predicates eternity of hell and eternity of heaven; by what right can men then say that heaven will never end, but that the torments of hell will cease? "Who has known the mind of the Lord" better than He has known it Himself, and who has dared to "be His counsellor"? The Catholic Church believes and teaches her children that the soul can never die; that when this life has been spent it will enter into eternal life; that the eternity will depend upon the works wrought in time; that we are, through life, writing our sentence and "making" our eternity for weal or for woe, for sorrow or for joy; that the body will die, but the soul will live; that at the last day the body will rise again, and that body and soul will live together after the resurrection of the body; and that, whether in hell or in heaven, their life will be everlasting.

CHAPTER XXX

"LORD, IF IT BE THOU, BID ME COME TO THEE"

1. At the end of our inquiry into the tenets of the Catholic Creed, and after having answered the question which we put to ourselves at the beginning of the research, "What do Catholics believe?" we are confronted with two further queries, of which the first is: "Are Catholics bound in conscience to believe everything that the Church, to which they give a loyal and filial allegiance, teaches?" and the second: "Is it an article of the Catholic Creed that all Christians are, without exception, under obligation before God to belong to the one Catholic fold?"

The first of these questions is easily answered. To it we give an unequivocal and unqualified affirmative reply. Everything that the Church teaches as divine truth, every article, that is, of the Christian Creed, all Catholics are obliged to accept, whether it commends itself to their reason or not, and that, too, on the authority of God and of His divinely appointed Church. They are not bound to follow the teaching of any individual member of the Church, even though that member be a priest, a bishop, a doctor of the Church or a saint; but to the Church's Creed in its every part they must give an emphatic, a loyal and a willing assent.

2. The second question introduces a large subject, into which we may not enter at length; the exclusiveness of salvation, the narrowness of the way which leads to life everlasting and the fewness of those who find it. St Cyprian compares the Church to the ark of Noe, outside of which there was nothing but the destroying water, out of the pale of which

none were saved from destruction and death. Others have spoken of it as the house of Rahab, which, alone of the houses of Jericho, was spared, and in which only the dwellers were saved. In Catholic books we read, and from Catholic pulpits we hear at times, some such words as these: "Out of the Church there is no salvation." St Athanasius, in the creed which goes by his name, says: "Whosoever will be saved, before all things it is necessary that he hold the Catholic faith, which faith except every one do keep whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly"; and again: "This is the Catholic faith, which except a man believe faithfully he cannot be saved." Are these comparisons to be taken strictly? Are these words to be interpreted literally? Does the Catholic Church hold that no one can gain heaven who is not in actual and visible membership with her? Does she so understand the words attributed to St Cyprian: "No one can have God for his Father who has not the Church for his mother"? By no means. Such comparisons and such words must be taken with their context; they need a glossary, they must be understood in the sense in which they are meant. "God wishes all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth."[1] If, through their own culpable negligence or through their own voluntary fault, they do not come to the knowledge of the truth, they are wilfully outside the pale of salvation, and they will not be saved *because* they will not. God wishes them to be saved, it is true, but He wishes them to *wish* to be saved; and He will not save them against their will. He who created them without their consent will not save them without both their consent and their co-operation. If, however, through no fault of their own, through the accident of birth or circumstances not of their own creation, they do not see the truth, which they would willingly embrace and follow if it

[1] 1 Tim. ii, 4.

were presented to them, then, if they are baptized, God knows them as His own, they belong to the soul of the Church, they have a place in her large and loving heart; and though they may not be visibly incorporated in her visible body, they are by baptism her children—visible to God though invisible to men—and so they are children of God and, if faithful and dutiful children, heirs of heaven.

Some there are, we hope many, who follow the light which they have received, but they do not see it in its fulness; if they are true to the light which is revealed to them, further light will be given. Provided they do not refuse the light, or close their eyes to it, or from human motives hope that they may not see whither it leads, then for them we need not fear. The star which appeared to the wise men in the East left them when they reached Jerusalem; but when they had diligently inquired, "Where is He that is born King of the Jews?" the "star, which they had seen in the East, went before them until it came and stood over where the Child was. And seeing the star they rejoiced with exceeding great joy."[1] So with those of whom we are speaking, if they are in good faith, if they wish to know, if they are anxious to find the truth, the star will appear again and lead them on till it "comes and stands over where the Child is;" and if they "rejoice with exceeding great joy" they will enter into the house and find "the Child with Mary, His mother." This is divine teaching, though it may not be the wisdom of men. "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold." They are even now the sheep of the divine Shepherd, though they are outside His visible fold; He acknowledges them as His own. They believe in Him, they trust in Him, they love Him, they wish to be with Him in His one fold, wherever that fold may be; they pray for guidance, they long for light to see, and faith to know. What then? He will give it to them: "These also I must bring in, that there

[1] Matt. ii, 9, 10.

may be one [visible] fold and one Shepherd." If they traffic with the talents which they have received, the greatest of talents, the priceless talent of faith, will be given to them, and they will "enter in and adore."

3. Those, on the other hand, who wrap up their talent in a napkin, or bury it in the ground, will receive no further talents; nay, the talents which they have will be taken from them, and given to those who have used their talents well. If a man trifles with grace, puts off through human fear, dreads the truth as children fear a ghost, is afraid to see the star lest he should be obliged to follow it—to such a man we may apply the comparisons and the words which we have just cited. Those who shirk the truth, who will not believe, who see the pillar of fire by night and the pillar of a cloud by day, but will not follow their guidance, who are afraid to face the truth on account of the worldly difficulties which it may entail, who close their ears that they may not hear, and their eyes that they may not see, who are ignorant because they do not wish to know, blind because they do not wish to see, deaf because they will not hear, who, in a word, "love father or mother, or son or daughter," or earthly things, or self, more than God—these are they who will be shut out when the Bridegroom comes and calls. If we run away from God in life and refuse to hear His voice, at the end of life we may say: "Lord, Lord," but it will be too late then. "Not every one that saith 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of My Father who is in heaven, he shall enter into the kingdom of heaven."[1] If at the end of time we are forced to admit:

> I fled Him down the nights and down the days,
> I fled Him down the arches of the years;
> I fled Him down the labyrinthian ways
> Of my own soul; and in the midst of tears
> I hid from Him;

[1] Matt. vii, 21

He will flee from us, and we shall not find Him; He will hide from us, and we shall not see Him. The co-apostles, St Peter and St Paul, are equally emphatic upon this subject. The one writes in scathing words: "There shall be amongst you lying teachers, who shall bring in sects of perdition,[1] and deny the Lord who bought them, bringing on themselves swift destruction. . . . The Lord knoweth how to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgement to be tormented; and especially them who . . . . despise governments, audacious, pleasing themselves, they fear not to bring in sects, blaspheming . . . . leaving the right way, they have gone astray . . . . these are wells without water, and clouds tossed with whirlwinds, to whom the mist of darkness is reserved."[2] The language of the other apostle, St Paul, is no less striking: "I beseech you brethren to mark them who cause dissensions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and to avoid them; for they that are such serve not Christ our Lord, but their own belly, and by pleasing speeches and good words, seduce the hearts of the innocent;"[3] "though we or an angel from heaven preach to you a gospel besides that which you have received, let him be accursed."[5] St John, too, speaks plainly: "They went out from us, because they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have remained with us; but that they may be manifest that they are not of us."[4] "Whoever revolteth and continueth not in the doctrine of Christ hath not God. He that continueth in the doctrine, the same hath both the Father and the Son."[6]

Our Lord's own words all bear this interpretation, all go to show that one who voluntarily and wilfully rejects the Church's claim rejects God, and life, and light, and the eternal home. The branch cut off from the tree, which

[1] The Protestant version says "damnable heresies."
[2] 2 Peter ii, 1-15. [3] Rom. xvi, 17. [4] Gal. 1, 6.
[5] 1 John ii, 18. [6] 2 John, 9.

bears no fruit, but is only fit to be cast into the fire and to burn;[1] the house divided against itself, which must inevitably fail and fall;[2] the vineyard of the Master, of which only the workers receive their hire at the end of the day;[3] Jerusalem, whose children our Lord would have gathered together "as the hen gathereth her chickens under her wings," but who would not[4]; the one sheepfold of the one Shepherd, whose voice the sheep were to hear, and who were thus to "have eternal life"[5]; all these and many other words of the Master are evidence, clear and indisputable, of His will that they who will not belong to Him and His on earth shall not be with Him and His in heaven. His general rule is "the Lord daily added to the Church such as should be saved,"[6] and no man has a right to claim or expect exemption from His law. We are all bound, in the words of St Cyprian, to "strive to hold fast, as much as we can, the unity appointed by the Lord, and through the apostles delivered to us, their successors; and, as much as in us lies, to labour that we may gather into the Church the straying and wandering sheep, which the froward faction of some and the temptation of heresy, separate from their mother; leaving those only to remain without, who persist in their obstinacy or their madness, and will not return to us; who will hereafter have to give an account to the Lord of the division and separation they have caused, and of their abandonment of the Church."[7]

4. The Catholic Church teaches, on this head, that all men must be in deepest earnest in their search for truth, and that truth is one and undivided. The one who is in doubt must not rest till he discovers what and where truth is. Like the sun it may be obscured by a passing shadow, but it cannot eternally remain hidden by clouds. He who is "amid the encircling gloom" must pray for light; he who

[1] John xv, 4. [2] Matt. xii, 25. [3] Matt. xx. [4] Matt. xxiii, 37.
[5] John x, 27. [6] Acts ii, 47. [7] Ep. xlv, 2.

is in a mist must pray that it be dispersed; he who, like the man of whom we read in the Gospel, sees "men, as it were trees, walking," must cry out with Bartimeus, the son of Timeus: "Lord, that I may see." He, who, like Saul, is struck down in the way and is blind, must go to some good Ananias that the scales may be removed from his eyes and that he may see "the truth as it is in Jesus," and as He has revealed it to men.

Nor must he expect to see, as with the bodily eye; he must be prepared to believe. Faith comes before vision; we must first believe, and then see. "Blessed are they who have believed, and have not seen." "One step enough for me." That step is faith. This "one step" is, oftentimes, of all steps the most difficult. "C'est le premier pas qui coute." The other steps, after this first is accomplished, are easy. The first plunge into the sea gives us a shock, the after plunges give pleasure. When a man has put his hand to the plough, he must not look back, because he finds the first effort hard and painful; as he goes on in the work his labour will be lighter. Truth is the "precious pearl" of the Gospel; we are wise in selling all things to purchase it. It is "better than all the most precious things; and whatever may be desired cannot be compared to it."[1] Of it we may say: "He that shall find me shall find life, and shall draw salvation from the Lord; but he that shall sin against me shall hurt his own soul. All that hate me love death."[2] Truth is life, and truth is eternal. No wonder that men have to make sacrifices for truth. The way to heaven is straight and narrow, and the way to heaven is the way of truth. "The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent only can take it." Martyrs bled for truth, confessors lived for it, virgins consecrated their lives to it, apostles left all things to follow its guidance.

[1] Prov. viii, 11. [2] Ibid. 35, 36.

It must be so to the end. "Thy way is on the sea, and thy pathway on many waters; and thy footsteps shall not be known."[1]

5. Confidence in God must accompany self-sacrifice, in those who would find and follow truth. God can bring light out of darkness, He can command the storm. "Great was the noise of the waters; the clouds sent out a sound. The waters saw Thee, O God; the waves saw Thee; and they were afraid, and the depths were troubled."[2] Peter experienced this, and Peter is the patron of those who would believe. The night was dark and stormy, the waves rose mountain high, "the ship was tossed by the waves." Jesus was seen walking upon the waters. The apostles were afraid, not knowing that it was He. "It is I, He said, be not afraid. Then Peter making answer said: Lord, if it be Thou, bid me come to Thee upon the waters. And He said, Come. And Peter going down out of the ship, walked upon the waters to come to Jesus."[3] He who would come to Jesus must not be afraid of wind or waves, of sea or storm. There is One who can say to the storm "Peace! be calm! be still!" or, if He wills it so, can make us walk upon the waters, even in the midst of the storm. If He is to calm the waves, we must "beseech" Him, as the apostles did when their little bark seemed to be at the mercy of the sea. "Lord, doth it not concern Thee that we perish?" We need not ask, as the apostles did, we know that it doth concern Him. We know that "He hath care of us." If it did not "concern Him," would He have come down from the haven of eternal rest to embark with us on this stormy sea? Would He have battled with us, and for us, against the storm, till He was wounded in hands and feet and side, till His soul was sorrowful and His body cold in death? Would He have remained with us to the end of time, to say to the

[1] Ps. lxxvi, 20. [2] Ibid. 18, 17 Matt. xiv, 26–29.

winds, "Peace," and to the waves, "Be still"? We must have confidence in Him. Then too, trusting in Him, we must have confidence in ourselves. For want of confidence in God, and for lack of self-confidence begotten of faith and confidence in Him, many are "afraid," like the apostles, when they see Jesus walking on the waters. If they would only trust Him, and trust themselves to Him who calls, they would walk upon the waters, and overcome the waves, and defy the storm, and find the haven of rest which is the Church of the living God.

"Lord, if it be Thou." If Thou art really in this Church, which from my youth, maybe, I have heard reviled and called by unholy names; if the Catholic Church be the home of Thy truth; if it be Thy ark, Thy city of refuge, Thy haven on earth; if Thou art its light, its strength, its life; if Thou art the living source of its unity, its holiness, its perpetual life; if Thou art the perennial fountain of its graces, its sacraments, its priesthood; if Thou art the rock upon which it rests, the spirit which quickens it, the soul which vivifies it; "Lord, if it be Thou, then bid me come to Thee." Yea, Lord, bid me come to Thee "upon the waters," high and rough and tempestuous though they seem, bitter though they be as Mara, blood-red as Pharao's river, deep and cold and cruel as the Red Sea; "Lord, if it be Thou, bid me come to Thee, yea, upon the waters." Dear reader, if you have not yet heard the call of God, may it sound in your ear and find an echo in your heart and a response in your life. May Jesus say to YOU as He said to Peter, as He has said through the ages to millions untold, as He is saying to so many to-day: "COME."

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